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GO WORLD

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KISEIDO PUBLISHING COMPANY

楊海周延

New Publication from Kiseido

A Dictionary of Modern Fuseki

The Korean Style

Of the three main stages in a game of go, there is no doubt that the middle game is the most exciting. This is where most of the action of a game occurs: stones are attacked and defended or captured; potential territories are invaded or erased; nerve-wracking ko fights and kill-or-be-killed capturing races that can decide the outcome of the game take place.

In some ways, however, the endgame is even more full of tension, as the final shape of the game becomes more and more tangible and the outcome of the game looms near.

In contrast, there is a tendency among amateur players to downplay the opening stage, to view it just as a necessary preliminary before they can get to grips with the opponent. However, professionals regard it as the most important stage of the game. This is where the foundation is laid for the fighting that will take place in the middle game. The wisdom of your opening strategy will determine whether you start the middle game with an advantage over the opponent or whether you have an inferior position that places you at a disadvantage. Many players are happy to rely on their fighting strength to make up for a bad start, but if your opponent is an equally strong fighter, it may be the relative skill at the opening that will be decisive.

This book is unique in the English go literature. It analyses contemporary opening strategy in depth, focusing on the new patterns recently developed by the Korean players who dominate the international go scene. Typically, it analyzes the first 30 moves or so of the most important patterns; it is the first book that makes it possible for amateurs to play a professional-level opening.

After thoroughly analyzing 59 patterns, the book ends with 36 problems.

304 pages; size: Go World size (18 x 26cm)

Price: US\$30.00 + \$3.00 shipping

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The cover: Competing for Glory in Shinagawa-ro (Shinagawa-ro Zensei Kurabe). The middle panel of an oban triptych by Chikanobu, depicting courtesans of Shinagawa-ro, a famous high-class brothel in Tokyo in the Meiji era, engaged in various activities. The names of the courtesans at the go board are Kinran (right) and Hanaougi (left). From the collection of Mita Arts Gallery.

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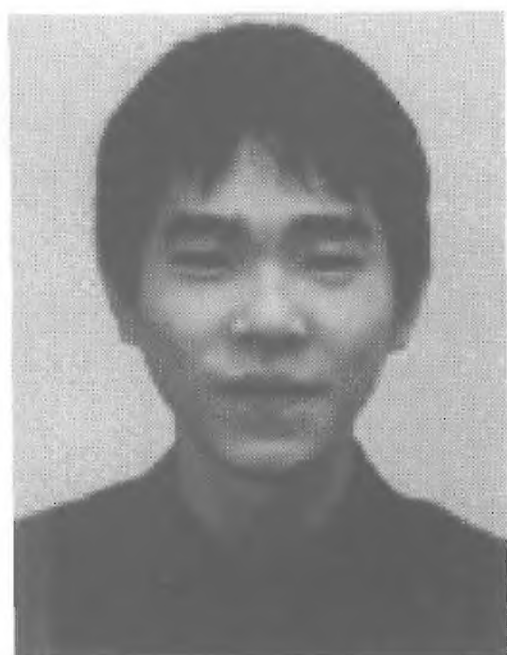
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Go World News

October 2004~mid-January 2005

by John Power

International



Two in a row for Yi Se-tol

Yi Se-tol wins 9th Samsung Cup

The big surprise in this tournament was the brilliant performance of the little-known 20-year-old Chinese player Wang Xi 5-dan, who only recently made his first appearance in the top ten in the Chinese rating list (see 'News from China'). However, in the final he ran into a player he couldn't handle: Yi Se-tol 9-dan of Korea. The 21-year-old Yi, whose great ambition is to overtake his compatriot Yi Ch'ang-ho as the world's number one, defeated Wang with straight wins to take his fourth international title.

Yi won a prize of 200 million won (about ¥20 million yen or \$194,000*). Wang had to be content with 50 million won. This is another result China will regret: getting three players in the semifinals was not enough.

Full results since our last report are given below.

Quarterfinals

(6 Oct.) Yi Se-tol 9-dan (Korea) (W) defeated Wang Lei 8-dan (China) by resig.; Wang Xi 5-dan (China) (W) d. Song T'ae-kon 7-dan (Korea) by 2½.

(7 Oct.) Zhou Heyang 9-dan (China) (B) d. Pak Yeong-hun 9-dan (Korea) by resig.; Gu Li 7-dan (China) (W) d. Ch'oe Ch'eol-han 8-dan (Korea) by resig.

* Conversions in this issue have been made at the rate of \$1 = ¥103.

Semifinals

Game 1 (16 Nov.). Yi Se-tol (W) d. Gu by resig.; Wang (B) d. Zhou by 3½.

Game 2 (18 Nov.). Gu (W) d. Yi by resig.; Wang (W) d. Zhou by resig. (both games took 172 moves).

Game 3 (19 Nov.). Yi (B) d. Gu by resig.

Final (Seoul)

Game 1 (7 Dec.). Yi (B) by resig.

Game 2 (9 Dec.). Yi (W) by resig.

Yi Se-tol wins 2nd Toyota & Denso Cup

Yi Se-tol is obviously in top form these days. Less than a month after his Samsung triumph, he followed it up by capturing a bigger prize. In another Korea-China final, he defeated Chang Hao 9-dan 2-1 to win the 2nd Toyota & Denso Cup World Go Oza.

First prize is 30 million yen (about \$291,000), second ten million, and there are two third prizes of five million yen each.

Chang Hao made a good comeback in international go in 2004, but this is his sixth second place in an international tournament. All his losses have been to Korean opponents. He must be getting frustrated, but he still has a chance to score his first win in the Ing Cup; at age 28, it's time.

Game 1 (5 Jan.). Yi (W) by resig.

Game 2 (7 Jan.). Chang (W) by resig.

Game 3 (8 Jan.). Yi (W) by resig.

China doing well in 6th Nong Shim Cup

The 6th Nong Shim Spicy Noodles Cup has completed two of its three rounds. This knockout tournament pits five-player teams from Japan, China and Korea against each other. The players have a time allowance of just one hour each, followed by one-minute byo-yomi. The most interesting rule is that a team can field its players in any order — the name of a new player doesn't have to be reported until three hours before the game.

As in the 5th Cup, Korea failed to win a game in the opening round, then saw two more of its players eliminated in the second round. Once

again, it will have to rely on Yi Ch'ang-ho if it is not to spoil its record.

The final round is scheduled to be played in Shanghai from 22 February.

The Beijing Round

Game 1 (12 Oct.). Mimura Tomoyasu 9-dan (Japan) (B) defeated Han Chong-chin 5-dan (Korea) by resig.

Game 2 (13 Oct.). Zhou Heyang 9-dan (China) (B) d. Mimura by resig.

Game 3 (14 Oct.). Zhou (W) d. An Tal-hun 6-dan (Korea) by resig.

Game 4 (15 Oct.). Takao Shinji 8-dan (Japan) (W) d. Zhou by resig.

The Pusan Round

Game 5 (24 Nov.). Takao (W) d. Yu Ch'ang-hyeok 9-dan (Korea) by 4½.

Game 6 (25 Nov.). Peng Quan 5-dan (China) (W) d. Takao by 1½.

Game 7 (26 Nov.). Ch'oe Ch'eol-han 9-dan (Korea) (B) d. Peng by resig.

Game 8 (27 Nov.). Cho Chikun 9-dan (Japan) (W) d. Ch'oe by resig.

Game 9 (28 Nov.). Luo Xihe 9-dan (China) (W) b. Cho by resig.

Game 10 (29 Nov.). Yi Ch'ang-ho (W) b. Luo by resig.

Remaining players

Japan: (Kato Masao), O Meien

China: Wang Lei, Wang Xi



Playing for his first international title: Ch'oe Ch'eol-han

5th Ing Cup final tied

The first two games of the best-of-five final between Ch'oe Ch'eol-han 9-dan of Korea and Chang Hao 9-dan of China in the 5th Ing cup were played in Seoul at the end of 2004. Black

won both games, so neither player's New Year holiday was spoiled. The dates for the remaining games, to be played in Beijing, have not yet been decided.

Game 1 (26 Dec.). Ch'oe (B) by resig.

Game 2 (28 Dec.). Chang (B) by resig.



Seventh time lucky for Chang Hao?

9th LG Cup: China vs. Japan

The final of the LG Cup will be fought between Cho U of Japan and Yu Bin of China. The former has yet to win an international title, but his outstanding form recently shows that his time may have come. Yu Bin will be bidding for his fourth title.

Quarterfinals (Seoul, 26 Oct.)

Cho U 9-dan (Japan) (W) d. Yu Ch'ang-hyeok 9-dan (Korea) by resig.; Cho Han-seung 7-dan (Korea) (B) d. Kong Jie 7-dan (China) by resig.; Yu Bin 9-dan (China) (B) d. Weon Seong-chin 5-dan (Korea) by 6½; Yi Ch'ang-ho 9-dan (Korea) (B) d. Yi Se-tol 9-dan (Korea) by resig.

Semifinals (Cheju Island, 24 Jan.)

Cho U (B) d. Cho Han-seung by resig.; Yu Bin (B) d. Yi Ch'ang-ho by resig.

5th Chunlan Cup final: China vs. Korea

The best-of-three final, between Yi Ch'ang-ho and Zhou Heyang, will be held in Beijing on 12 to 19 March.

Pak wins 1st Zhonghuan Cup

Pak Yeong-hun 9-dan of Korea, current holder of the Fujitsu Cup, has scored his second triumph in international go, winning the 1st Zhonghuan Cup World Go Championship. In the final, he defeated O Rissei, who was playing for Taiwan; the latter had beaten Yi Ch'ang-ho in

the semifinals, which should be good enough to take an international title, but Korea has strength in depth.

Semifinals (13 Jan.)

O Rissei 9-dan (Taiwan) (B) d. Yi Ch'ang-ho 9-dan (Korea) by $\frac{1}{2}$; Pak Yeong-hun 9-dan (Korea) (B) d. Yamashita Keigo 9-dan (Japan) by resig.

Final (15 Jan.)

Pak (W) d. O by resig.



Pak now a dual champion

China wins 3rd Cheongkwangjang Cup

This Korean-sponsored women's championship has been changed into a team tournament along the lines of the Nongshim Spicy Noodles Cup, with five-player teams from Japan, China and Korea participating. The prize for the winning team is 100 million won (about ¥10,000,000 or \$97,000).

China dominated the first tournament in the new format, with Ye Gui 5-dan building the basis for victory by winning five games in a row. Japan was eliminated early, with just one win, but then Pak Chi-eun staged a gallant fightback for Korea before bowing to the world's number one woman player Rui Naiwei.

The Beijing Round

Game 1 (9 Nov.). Yi Min-chin 4-dan (Korea) (B) d. Cao Cheng 1-dan (China) by $5\frac{1}{2}$.

Game 2 (10 Nov.). Umezawa Yukari 5-dan (Japan) (W) d. Yi by resig.

Game 3 (11 Nov.). Ye Gui 5-dan (China) (B) d. Umezawa by resig.

Game 4 (12 Nov.). Ye (W) d. Hyoen Mi-chin 3-dan (Korea) by $6\frac{1}{2}$.



Rui leads the Chinese team to victory.

The Seoul Round

Game 5 (19 Dec.). Ye Gui 5-dan (China) (W) d. Yashiro Kumiko 5-dan (Japan) by resig.

Game 6 (20 Dec.). Ye (W) d. Kim Eun-seon 1-dan (Korea) by $2\frac{1}{2}$.

Game 7 (21 Dec.). Ye (W) d. Suzuki Ayumi 3-dan (Japan) by resig.

Game 8 (22 Dec.). Yun Yeong-seon 4-dan (Korea) (W) d. Ye by $3\frac{1}{2}$.

Game 8 (23 Dec.). Yun (W) d. Mannami Kana 3-dan by $3\frac{1}{2}$.

Game 10 (24 Dec.). Xu Ying 5-dan (China) (B) d. Yun by resig.

The Shanghai Round

Game 11 (17 Jan.). Xu (W) d. Kobayashi Izumi 6-dan (Japan) by resig.

Game 12 (18 Jan.). Pak Chi-eun 5-dan (Korea) (W) d. Xu by $8\frac{1}{2}$.

Game 13 (19 Jan.). Pak (W) d. Zhang Xuan 8-dan (China) by $4\frac{1}{2}$.

Game 14 (20 Jan.). Rui Naiwei 9-dan (China) (B) d. Pak by resig.



Zhou Heyang bests Japan's number one.

Zhou wins Agon Kiriama play-off

China made a bad start, losing the first four of the annual play-offs between the winners of the Japanese and Chinese Agon Kiriama play-offs, but it put an end to the losing streak last year and has now won two in a row.

The previous play-off was delayed and was not held until 8 May 2004. Gu Li 7-dan beat Kato Masao 9-dan to secure China's first victory.

The 6th play-off was held in Tokyo on 13 December. Taking black, Zhou Heyang 9-dan of China defeated Hane Naoki 9-dan of Japan by 2½ points.

Current international champions

4th Ing Cup: Yi Ch'ang-ho (Korea)
 2nd Toyota & Denso Cup: Yi Se-tol (Korea)
 17th Fujitsu Cup: Pak Yeong-hun (Korea)
 9th Samsung Cup: Yi Se-tol (Korea)
 4th Chunlan Cup: Yi Ch'ang-ho
 8th LG Cup: Yi Ch'ang-ho
 16th TV Asia Cup: Yu Bin (China)
 1st Zhonghuan: Pak Yeong-hun
 5th Nong Shim Spicy Noodles Cup: Korea
 3rd CSK Cup: China
 3rd Cheongkwangjang Cup: China

Most world championships won

19: Yi Ch'ang-ho (+ 2 invitationals)
 11: Cho Hun-hyeon
 6: Takemiya Masaki, Yu Ch'ang-hyeok
 5: Yi Se-tol
 4: Yoda Norimoto
 3: Yu Bin
 2: Otake Hideo, Ma Xiaochun, O Rissei, Cho Chikun, Pak Yeong-hun
 1: Kobayashi Koichi, Rin Kaiho, Seo Pong-su, Zhou Heyang

(By country) Korea: 44; Japan: 18;
 China: 6

Team championships (Jinro, Nong Shim, Igo Asia/CSK)

Korea: 11 Japan: 1 China: 1

title of Honorary Meijin. Taking his place is Cho U, who, with three titles to his name, has now clearly established himself as the number one player. There was nothing inevitable about his triumph, however; he was lucky to win the fourth game, in which Yoda set up an excellent position but failed to follow through. This must have been a very painful loss for the defending champion and one that Yoda will bitterly regret for a long time to come.

That's not to take any credit away from Cho U, who is threatening to dominate the go scene in the manner of Rin Kaiho or Cho Chikun in the past. He is the fifth and, at 24, the youngest Meijin-Honinbo in modern go. Along with the prestige, he has the second largest Japanese prize of 36 million yen (just under \$350,000).

Game 1 (9, 10 September). Yoda (B) by ½.

Game 2 (22, 23 Sept.). Cho (B) by 3½.

Game 3 (29, 30 Sept.). Yoda (B) by resig.

Game 4 (13, 14 Oct.). Cho (B) by 7½.

Game 5 (21, 22 Oct.). Cho (W) by 4½.

Game 6 (3, 4 Nov.). Cho (B) by 1½.

Top title winners (20+)

67: Cho Chikun	35: Rin Kaiho
64: Sakata Eio	34: Yoda Norimoto
59: Kobayashi Koichi	24: Ishida Yoshio
48: Otake Hideo	24: Takemiya Masaki
47: Kato Masao	23: Fujisawa Shuko
	21: O Rissei

Others: Hane Naoki: 10; Yamashita Keigo: 9; Cho U: 7



The player of the year in Japan

News from Japan

Cho U wins 29th Meijin title

Yoda Norimoto had looked as if he were settled in for a long reign as Meijin, but he has been dethroned one victory short of qualifying for the

Cho U defends 52nd Oza

Cho U ended what was the best year of his career on a triumphant note, rebuffing the challenge of Yamashita Keigo 9-dan 3-1 to defend his Oza title. With three title wins and one un-

successful challenge, he was by far the most outstanding player of the 2004 tournament year. The all-round strength he displayed was so impressive that it seems safe to predict that he is going to dominate the go scene for decades to come.

The Oza first prize is ¥13,500,000. It is Cho's seventh title, and five of them have been top-seven ones — he has hardly bothered with the minor titles (one of the other two was the NHK Cup).

Game 1 (29 Oct.). Cho (W) by resig.

Game 2 (18 Nov.). Cho (B) by 3½.

Game 3 (29 Nov.). Yamashita (B) by resig.

Game 4 (9 Dec.). Cho (B) by 5½.



A titleholder again

Yamashita captures Tengen on second attempt

Yamashita Keigo's unsuccessful Tengen challenge at the end of 2003 was the prelude to his loss of the Kisei title and a fairly dismal time all round in 2004. However, things looked up at the end of the year, when his second successive challenge fared a little better. A lacklustre Hane, mired in the depths of the worst slump of his career, offered little resistance, and Yamashita won his first Tengen title with straight wins. Hane's three-year reign at the 'centre' (tengen) of the go world came to an abrupt end.

The first prize is the same as for the Oza, though the Tengen, at number four, is ranked above the Oza.

Game 1 (Nov.). Yamashita (W) by 4½.

Game 2 (12 Nov.). Yamashita (B) by 1½.

Game 3 (26 Nov.). Yamashita (W) by resig.

Yuki Satoshi challenging for Kisei title

For nearly a decade now, Yuki Satoshi 9-dan has been the top player at the Kansai Ki-in and its best hope of taking a title. However, he has made only two challenges, both for the Gosei title (in 1997 and 2002) and both unsuccessful. Now, at the age of 32, he has secured a shot at the biggest prize of all.

The play-off to decide the challenge to Hane Naoki for the 29th Kisei title, held at the Nihon Ki-in on 8 November, was probably the most important game of Yuki's career so far. He rose to the occasion, defeating former Kisei Yamashita Keigo; playing black, Yuki won by 6½ points.

A Kansai Ki-in player has not appeared in a best-of-seven since Hashimoto Utao lost the inaugural Kisei title match to Fujisawa Shuko. The last actual win was the same player's victory over Sakata Eio way back in 1951, so one can imagine how much pressure the expectations of Osaka fans are placing on Yuki's shoulders.

Yuki enjoyed excellent results in 2004, scoring 47 wins to 15 losses. In contrast, Hane went into a slump after winning the Kisei and lost a majority of his games for the first time in his career. His final tally was 19–26 (12–21 after taking the Kisei). Almost by definition, the challenger has to be someone in top form, whereas a titleholder often goes into a slump (one reason perhaps being that he plays much fewer games than before), so Yuki's chances looked good.

However, these considerations became irrelevant when the title match started. Perhaps the two-day format and the psychological leeway of being able to drop two or three games in a best-of-seven made the difference — at any rate, Hane was in top gear when the match started. He played aggressively in a very difficult fighting contest in the first game and came out on top.

Game 1 (12, 13 Jan.). Hane (W) by resig.

Lead tied in 60th Honinbo league

After four rounds, Takao Shinji 8-dan and Cho Sonjin 9-dan share the lead, a clear two wins ahead of the field. It's going to be hard for anyone else to catch up, so the game between these two will probably decide the challenger.

Even so, only two players are definitely out of the running: O Rissei and Han Zenki have made abysmal starts and seem headed for demotion. All the players on two losses have a theoretical chance of making a tie.

60th Honinbo league (7 October 2004 to spring 2005)

Title-holder: Cho U

Rank	Player/opponent	YN	MT	OR	CS	OM	TS	SY	HZ	Score
1	Yoda Norimoto	—	1			0	0		1	2 - 2
2	Mimura Tomoyasu	0	—				0	1	1	2 - 2
3	O Rissei			—	0	0	0	0		0 - 4
4	Cho Sonjin			1	—	1		1	1	4 - 0
5	O Meien	1		1	0	—		0		2 - 2
5	Takao Shinji	1	1	1			—		1	4 - 0
5	So Yokoku		0	1	0	1		—		2 - 2
5	Han Zenki	0	0		0		0		—	0 - 4

30th Meijin league (10 December 2004 to summer 2005)

Title-holder: Cho U

Rank	Player/opponent	YN	KS	IT	YK	OM	YK	CS	OM	SH	Score
1	Yoda Norimoto	—						1	1		2 - 0
2	Kobayashi Satoru		—	1				1			2 - 0
3	Imamura Toshiya		0	—						1	1 - 1
4	Yamashita Keigo				—	1					1 - 0
5	O Meien				0	—	1				1 - 1
6	Yamada Kimio					0	—				0 - 1
7	Cho Sonjin	0	0					—			0 - 2
7	Ogata Masaki	0							—	0	0 - 2
7	Sakai Hideyuki			0					1	—	1 - 1

30th Meijin league

There are two new faces in the new league and one 'veteran' making a comeback. The first of the debutants is Sakai Hideyuki 6-dan, who is in the fourth year of his professional career after abandoning his medical career soon after graduation. In the play-off to join the league, he defeated Hane Naoki Kisei. He also made a good start in the league, winning his first game.

The other debutant is Ogata Masaki 9-dan, who secures his first league place at the age of 40. The veteran is Cho Sonjin 9-dan, who is still only 34 but who has served a term as Honinbo and who is playing in his tenth league.

Takao wins Ryusei

Takao Shinji 8-dan defeated Yamada Kimio 8-dan in the final of the 13th Ryusei tournament, telecast on 26 September, to score his second victory in this tournament. Taking white, Takao secured a resignation. First prize is five million yen (about \$48,500) and second is two million yen.

This is Takao's sixth minor title. Earlier in his career, he was often bracketed with Yamashita Keigo, Cho U, and Hane Naoki as one of

the 'four young lions' of Japanese go, but the others have left him behind. He must be getting impatient to join them at the top.

Chinen wins 23rd Women's Honinbo

Chinen Kaori 3-dan has made a comeback as Women's Honinbo, winning this title for the fourth time. In the title match, she lost the opening game, but swept the next three, thus putting an end to Kobayashi Izumi's three-year reign as titleholder.

First prize is 5.8 million yen (about \$56,000). The winner plays in the Japan-China Women's Young Stars Play-off (a name which seems to assume that the competitors will be young players, though older players participate in the Women's Honinbo).

Game 1 (29 Sept.). Kobayashi (W) by resig.

Game 2 (13 Oct.). Chinen (W) by resig.

Game 3 (27 Oct.). Chinen (B) by 9½.

Game 4 (2 Nov.). Chinen (W) by 2½.

Hane wins Agon Kiriya Cup and Okan title

Hane Naoki Kisei defeated Kobayashi Koichi 9-dan in the final of the 11th Agon Kiriya

Cup, held at the headquarters of the Agon sect of Buddhism in Kyoto on 9 October. Playing black, Hane won by 3½ points and took the first prize of ten million yen (about \$97,000). Kobayashi's consolation prize was three million yen.

On 17 November, Hane (B) defeated Yamashiro Hiroshi 9-dan by resignation in the 45th Okan (Crown title). This title is open only to members of the Central Japan branch of the Nihon Ki-in, and first prize is ¥1,300,000 (about \$12,600). Hane has now won this title for three years in a row and the fourth time overall. Yamashiro holds the record, with 13 Okan titles.

Kiyonari wins Kansai Ki-in Championship

Sakai Hideyuki 6-dan, the Kansai Ki-in's newest star and probably its number two player on current form, started out well in the 48th Kansai Ki-in Championship, but then fell victim to a determined fightback by Kiyonari Tetsuya 9-dan, so he was unable to repeat his success of the previous year (the previous winner doesn't defend the title).

Game 1 (20 Oct.). Sakai (B) by 8½.

Game 2 (13 Nov.). Kiyonari (B) by resig.

Game 3 (25 Nov.). Kiyonari (W) by 1½.

34th Okura Prizes

Six Okura Prizes were awarded on 15 November for contributions to the go world. Four of the recipients are well known to Western fans. They are Nakayama Noriyuki 6-dan, Sugiuchi Masao 9-dan, Honda Sachiko 7-dan, and Watanabe Fumio.

Nakayama is probably the most prolific go writer ever, having penned over 200 books; he has also made countless instruction tours of Europe and the US. Sugiuchi challenged for the Honinbo title in 1954 and 1958 and also served many terms as a director of the Nihon Ki-in. Honda Sachiko won seven women's titles in a career lasting from 1947 to 2000.

Watanabe is a former chairman of the Nihon Ki-in Board of Directors and president of the IGF.

Kansai Ki-in abolishes rating tournament

The Kansai Ki-in has followed in the footsteps of the Nihon Ki-in, though one year behind, in abolishing its rating tournament. Its new promotion system, which came into effect on 1 January 2005, is said to be very similar to the Nihon Ki-in's system (described in GW97, pages 11 and 12).

The first promotion under the new system is of Sakai Hideyuki to 7-dan for earning a place in the Meijin league (he can go to 8-dan if he wins the league and then 9-dan if he wins the title, which would mean advancing from amateur status to 9-dan in under five years).

Judan challenger: Cho Chikun or Takao

The challenger for the 43rd Judan title will be either Cho Chikun, 25th Honinbo, or Takao Shinji 8-dan winners of the winners' and losers' sections respectively. The play-off will be held on 3 February.

Promotion

To 2-dan: Anzai Nobuaki (the only promotion in the last quarter of 2004)

Obituaries

Toshimitsu Matsuo

Toshimitsu Matsuo, former Chairman of the Board of Directors of the Nihon Ki-in and President of the International Go Federation, died of heart failure on 9 November. He was 80 years old. After a distinguished career at Japan Airlines, of which he became president in 1990, he joined the Nihon Ki-in board in 1997. He succeeded Watanabe Fumio as Chairman of the Board in April 1999 and as President of the International Go Federation in June 2001. He resigned these posts because of bad health in April and June respectively of 2004.

Kato Masao (1947–2004)

Kato Masao 9-dan, Chairman of the Board of Directors of the Nihon Ki-in and one of the top stars of modern go, died of a cerebral infarction and complications in a Tokyo hospital at 12:33 p.m. on 30 December. He had fallen ill on 7 December and undergone an operation on 10 December. It was said to have been successful and he was recuperating in hospital, but his condition suddenly worsened on the 28th and he died on the 30th.

A private funeral was held by his family and the Nihon Ki-in held a farewell gathering, attended by Kato's family, with go fans on 21 January.

Kato was one of the greatest players of the modern tournament era. He is fifth in the all-time listings, with a total of 47 title wins. His most notable achievements were winning the Honinbo title four times, the Meijin title twice, the Judan



Kato Masao: Born in Fukuoka City, Kyushu, on 15 March. Became a disciple of Kitani Minoru in 1959, made 1-dan in 1964 and 9-dan in 1978. Won his first title, the Gosei, in 1976. Won the Honinbo title the following year and held it for three terms. Won the Meijin title in 1986 and 1987. Became the oldest player to win the Honinbo title in 2002. Died on 30 December 2004.

title seven times and the Oza 11 times. His final career tally was 1253 wins (second only to Rin Kaiho) to 664 losses. His last game was played on 2 December; he defeated the current Kisei challenger, Yuki Satoshi — he captured a large group, reviving memories of his youthful nickname of 'the killer'. He was also a member of the Japanese team in the current Nong Shim Cup and hadn't yet played.

Kato became Vice Chairman of the board on 25 June 2002 and was the right-hand man of the chairman, Toshimitsu Matsuo, who was grappling with the task of reforming the administration of the Nihon Ki-in. Kato was tapped by Toshimitsu because he was the head of a group of professionals called the Reform Committee who were concerned about the administrative problems of the Nihon Ki-in, which had lost money eight years in a row; the board seemed to offer no effective solutions to the Ki-in's problems, and Kato's group played the main role in a 'coup d'état', forcing the professional members of the Board of Directors to resign. Among Ki-in insiders, this was called 'the Kato rebellion'; it was endorsed by his fellow professionals because of their trust in Kato.

The Toshimitsu-Kato partnership moved quickly, curbing expenses and getting the Nihon

Ki-in accounts into the black in 2002. Under their leadership, the board abolished the rating tournament (Oteai), saving nearly 100 million yen a year, and established a new rating system. The tournament system for the newspaper titles was also reformed. In order to strengthen the Ki-in's appeal to go fans, its own server was set up and the Go Hall of Fame was founded.

Kato was particularly concerned about the decline in the number of Japanese go fans (estimated to be just over half of the figure in the 70s) and Japan's decline in international go. Following Toshimitsu's resignation, he became acting chairman in April 2004, then was officially elected to the post on 8 June. He was only the fifth active player in the 80-year history of the Nihon Ki-in to serve as chairman and the first who was still a frontline player. In fact, he became Vice Chairman in the midst of a successful challenge for the Honinbo title.

Kato was particularly interested in promoting go among children. He worked to have go included in the school curriculum and he attended a great number of children's events, often accompanied by his disciple Umezawa Yukari 5-dan, who is the 'face' of the *Hikaru no go* cartoon series (go lessons by her were presented with the cartoon on TV). Kato also set up a summit meeting in December with representatives of the Korean and Chinese professional associations at which he made a number of important proposals, including one for staging a go World Cup.

Kato was also president of the International Go Federations. He was expected to be an activist leader in what is often a purely honorary post, but we will never know what contributions he might have made to international amateur go.

A Vice Chairman of the Board of Directors, Kudo Norio 9-dan, who worked closely with Kato, is serving as acting Chairman until a new Chairman is elected.

Kato was one of the most popular players in the Japanese go world. Despite his success, he was modest; his typical manner was low-key and friendly, but he was known for his firm principles and intellectual honesty, which was perhaps why his fellow professionals entrusted the top position at the Nihon Ki-in to him. Kobayashi Koichi commented that he displayed fighting spirit in both his go and his personal character. Ishida Yoshio, another fellow Kitani disciple, lamented that it is going to be very hard to fill the gap that his death has left in the go world.

2004 statistics

Below are some lists of top players in 2004 from the statistical point of view.

Most prize money won

1. Cho U Meijin Honinbo: ¥104,956,528
2. Hane Naoki Kisei: ¥67,830,604
3. Yamashita Keigo Tengen: ¥57,101,390
4. Yoda Norimoto Gosei: ¥53,288,550
5. Kobayashi Koichi 9-dan: ¥38,270,000
6. O Rissei Judan: ¥34,049,100
7. Cho Chikun, 25th Honinbo: ¥27,660,004
8. Mimura Tomoyasu 9-dan: ¥26,537,040
9. O Meien 9-dan: ¥24,770,488
10. Takao Shinji 8-dan: ¥17,149,060

Most wins

1. Takao Shinji: 44 wins, 15 losses
2. Yamashita Keigo: 39-32
3. Han Zenki 7-dan: 38-15; Mizokami Tomochika 7-dan: 38-17; Kono Rin 7-dan: 38-18; Cho U: 38-25
7. Yoda Norimoto: 37-21
8. Kobayashi Koichi: 33-21; Yamada Kimio 8-dan: 33-21
10. Mimura Tomoyasu: 31-21
11. Cho Chikun: 30-23

Best winning percentage

1. Tsuruyama Atsushi 5-dan: 75% (27-9)
2. Takao Shinji: 74.58%
3. Ishikura Noboru 9-dan: 74.19% (23-8)

Most successive wins

1. Takao Shinji: 15
2. Kono Rin: 14
3. Ishikura Noboru: 13

Top players at the Kansai Ki-in

1. Sakai Hideyuki 6-dan: 48-13
2. Yuki Satoshi 9-dan: 47-15
3. Seto Taiki 6-dan: 35-11

News from Korea

8th New Stars Pro Best Ten

In the final of this tournament for young stars, Pak Cheong-sang 4-dan (aged 20) defeated An Yeong-kil 5-dan (aged 24) 2-1. The deciding game was played on 29 October. Pak won his first title in his fourth year as a professional.

1st Electric Land Cup King of Kings

As reported in GW101 (page 10), the preliminaries in this new tournament are divided into three groups by age. Almost all the more famous players were eliminated early on, and the finalists were two dark horses: Kim Seong-ryong 8-dan (aged 28) and Kim Chu-ho 4-dan (aged 19). The older Kim prevailed in the best-of-three final and took home a prize of 40 million won (nearly \$39,000). The younger Kim had to be content with 15 million won.

According to the Korean promotion rules, winners of the big-three tournaments (the LG Petroleum Cup, the Wangwi title, and this title) go up a dan, so Kim was promoted to 9-dan. He became the 30th 9-dan at the Korean Kiwon.

Game 1 (11 Oct.). Kim 8-dan (W) by resig.

Game 2 (12 Oct.). Kim 4-dan (W) by 1½.

Game 3 (18 Oct.). Kim 8-dan (W) by 2½.

Yi Ch'ang-ho defends LG Petroleum Cup

In the 9th LG Petroleum Cup, Yi Ch'ang-ho faced the challenge of current Fujitsu World Champion Pak Yeong-hun 9-dan, but the latter found no chinks in his armour. Yi scored three straight wins and won this title for the fifth time. His prize is 45 million won (about \$43,600). The second prize is 7 million won.

The second game was the key one. Although the time allowance is only three hours per player, the game lasted ten hours. Yi just managed to hold off Pak to win by half a point.

Game 1 (19 Oct.). Yi (B) by resig.

Game 2 (1 Nov.). Yi (W) by ½.

Game 3 (6 Nov.). Yi (B) by 2½.

Ch'oe wins Bacchus Cup: Chunweon

This is a 16-player knockout tournament. Despite having to start out over again, last year's winner Ch'oe Ch'eol-han 9-dan reached the final again. This time his opponent was An Tal-hun 6-dan, whom he defeated 3-0.

First prize is 13 million won (about ¥1,300,000 or \$12,600).

Game 1 (12 Nov.). Ch'oe (W) by resig.

Game 2 (19 Nov.). Ch'oe (B) by resig.

Game 3 (3 Dec.). Ch'oe (W) by resig.

Ch'oe promoted to 9-dan

In recognition of his outstanding achievements in tournaments, including taking two titles from Yi Ch'ang-ho, Ch'oe Ch'eol-han was pro-

moted to 9-dan on 2 November. Besides the above two titles, the Kuksu and Kiseong, Ch'oe has won the Chunweon title two years in a row and reached the final of the Ing Cup.

Rui wins back Women's Myeongin title

Rui Naiwei 9-dan has won back the title that she lost to Cho Hye-yeon last year. In the 6th Women's Myeongin title match, she defeated Cho 5-dan 2-0, winning this title for the fourth time.

First prize is 8 million won (about \$7700) and second prize is 3 million won.

Game 1 (29 Dec.). Rui (W) by resig.
Game 2 (4 Jan.). Rui (B) by resig.

48th Kuksu

Yi Ch'ang-ho is challenging Ch'oe Ch'eol-han, but has lost the opening game.

Game 1 (10 Jan.). Ch'oe (B) by resig.

News from China

Chinese ratings

Below is an update of the top ten places in the Chinese rating system. It's undated, but it was probably issued in autumn 2004.

In this list, Kong Jie and Gu Li change places. Also, Wang Xi, who has been one of China's top international players recently, finally makes the top ten.

- | | |
|------------------------------|-------------------|
| 1. Kong Jie: 2733 | 2. Gu Li: 2731 |
| 3. Wang Lei: 2670 | |
| 4. Zhou Heyang, Yu Bin: 2660 | |
| 6. Qiu Jun: 2656 | 7. Hu Yaoyu: 2655 |
| 8. Luo Xihe: 2645 | 9. Wang Xi: 2643 |
| 10. Chang Hao: 2639 | |

Zhou wins Agon Kiriya Cup

Zhou Heyang 9-dan won the 6th Agon Kiriya Cup, a sister tournament of the Japanese one. In the final, held on 30 October, he defeated Shao Weigang 9-dan; taking white, Zhou won by resignation.

Gu Li takes Mingren title

In the best-of-three final to decide the challenger to Qiu Jun for the 17th Mingren title, Gu Li 7-dan defeated Nie Weiping 9-dan 2-0. Gu won both games by resignation, playing white on

6 September and black on 21 September.

This was a disappointing result for China's former go superstar Nie, who in the last decade has been eclipsed by the younger generation.

In the title match, Gu defeated the youthful Mingren Qiu Jun (aged 22) 3-0 to win this title for the first time.

Game 1 (23 Dec.). Gu (W) by resig.
Game 2 (25 Dec.). Gu (B) by resig.
Game 3 (28 Dec.). Gu (W) by resig.

Zhang wins 2nd Jianqiao

The Jianqiao Women's Igo Open Tournament was founded in 2003, with a first prize of 30,000 yuan and a second prize of 10,000 yuan. The inaugural tournament was won by Zhang Xuan 8-dan, who also reached the final of the 2nd term (the title holder doesn't defend the title). Her opponent was Zheng Yan 2-dan, who was just 20. Zhang beat her 2-1.

Game 1 (15 Nov.). Zhang (W) by resig.
Game 2 (16 Nov.). Zheng (W) by 2½.
Game 3 (18 Nov.). Zhang (W) by ½.

News from Taiwan

4th Donggang Cup

Lin Zhihan 6-dan defeated Lin Shengxian 7-dan 2-1 to win the 4th Donggang Cup. The deciding game was played on 4 November. We don't have any other details of this tournament, but we can give a list of prizewinners to date.

1. Zhou Junxun 9-dan (beat Zhou Heping 1-dan in the single-game final).
2. Peng Jinghua 6-dan (beat Huang Xiangren 3-dan).
3. Zhou Heping 3-dan (beat Dai Jiashen 7-dan).

Zhou wins 31st Mingren

Zhou Junxun defeated Lin Shengxian 7-dan 4-0 to win the 31st Mingren tournament. The deciding game was played on 31 December.

Corrections

1. GW102, page 3. We guessed wrong about TEDA. John Fairbairn informs us it's an acronym for Tianjin Economic Development Area. ('Taida' is a transliteration of TEDA into Chinese.)
2. GW102, page 42, bottom right) 'JP Morgan Cup' should read 'Zhonghuan Cup'.

The 28th Kisei Title Match: Yamashita vs. Hane

Games 4 to 7

The saga of *Go World's* coverage of the 2004 Kisei title match continues, having now extended across three issues.

In *GW102*, we left Yamashita Keigo in a dismal position, down 0–3 in his defence of his first big title. If he were to lose the match with straight losses, his victory the previous year might begin to look like a fluke.

The encouraging sign was that Yamashita had reverted to his usual aggressive style in the third game, even though he threw away his chances with an uncharacteristic blunder. With his back to the wall in the fourth game, he launches a bold counterattack, carrying the fight to the enemy and threatening to pull off a miraculous comeback.

The match so far:

Game 1 (15, 16 Jan.). Hane (B) won by resig.
Game 2 (28, 29 Jan.). Hane (W) won by resig.
Game 3 (4, 5 Feb.). Hane (B) won by 3½.

Game Four: Start of the fightback

White: Hane Naoki Tengen

Black: Yamashita Keigo Kisei

Played in In-no-shima City, Hiroshima Prefecture on 18 & 19 February 2004. *Commentary by O Meien. Report by Yamada Hiroyuki.*

If Yamashita were to drop this game and so lose the series four-straight, it would be the first shutout since the 5th title match, when Fujisawa Shuko Kisei defeated Otake Hideo. This seemed a real possibility, as Yamashita was in the worst slump of his career, having lost eight games in a row, starting just before the final Tengen game in December 2003. In fact, it was the first such prolonged slump in his career. He had won a game shortly before this one, finally putting an end to his losing streak, but one win did not signal a recovery of form.

O Meien had a different slant. 'If all you feel is that playing go is painful, then you are in bad form, but that doesn't seem to be the case. He is playing positively. All kinds of things happen in the process of developing your game. Rather than [saying Yamashita is in bad form], I would note what fine form Hane is in.'

This game was played in In-no-shima City, the birthplace of the Edo-period 'go saint' Shusaku. In 1997, it declared go an official 'city sport', the first city in Japan to do so. The aim was to help publicize the city and also to promote tourism by go fans. A number of other cities, including Omachi in Nagano Prefecture, where the World Amateur Go Championship was held in 1996, have followed its lead. The city does what it can to make visiting go players feel at home; on request, it will dispatch go players to hotels to play guests.

This was the seventh title-match game the city had hosted. The day before it started, the players got in the mood for top-level go by visiting the house where Shusaku was born and the Shusaku museum.

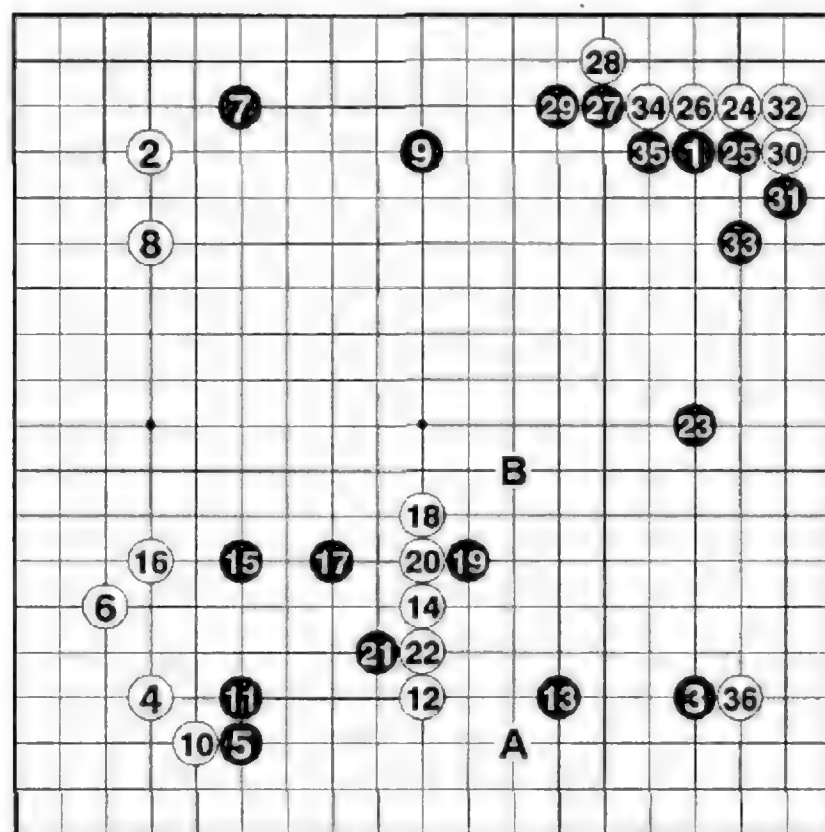


Figure 1 (1–36)

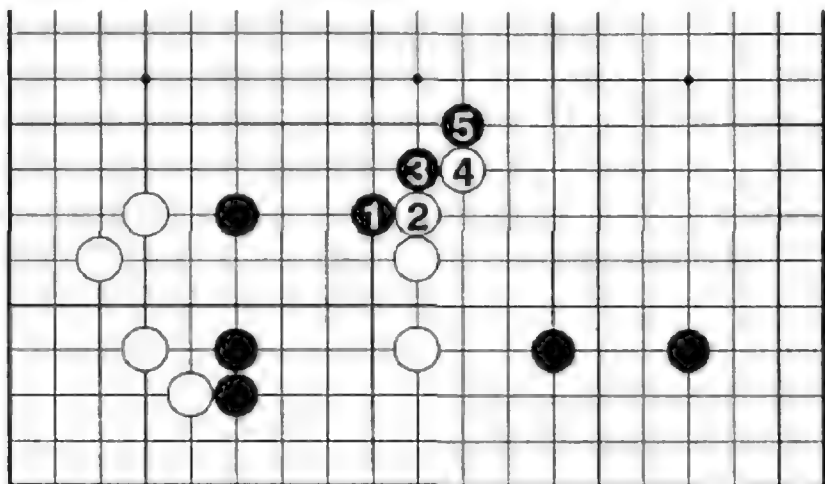
Figure 1 (1–36). *Hane goes for territory.*

Yamashita is fond of the opening pattern to 7, which first made its appearance a couple of years ago. He also played it in Game Four of the 2003 Meijin title match (see *GW101*).

Black 13 looks natural, but Black A is also possible. O: 'It's not clear whether or not the bottom is big.' Capping with Black 14 would also be a good strategy.

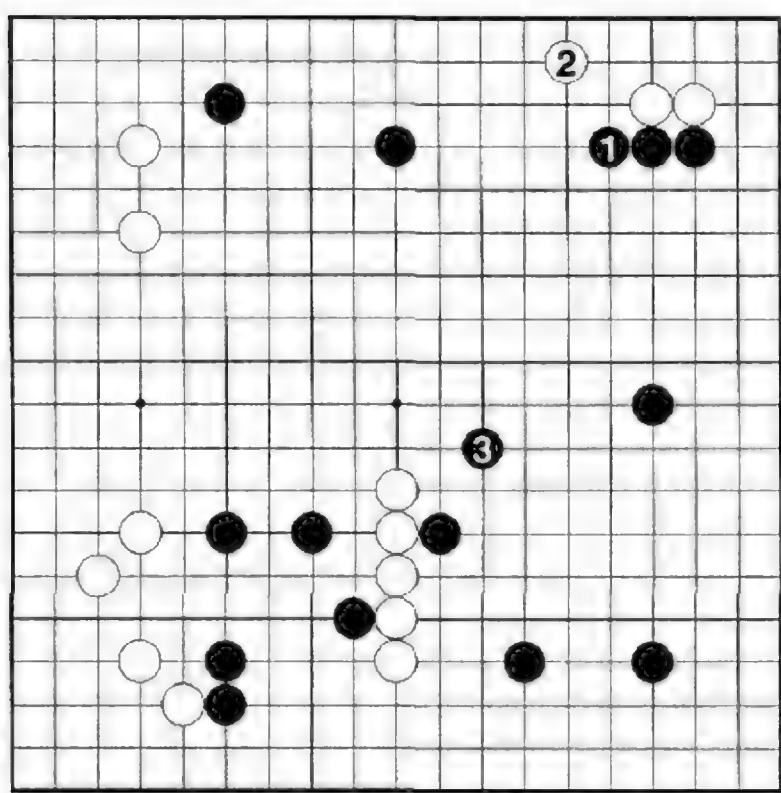
Black peeps at 21 to reduce the severity of a potential white attack, then sets up a *sanrensei* with 23. O: 'This is a large fuseki point, but the scale is small' [presumably because White's

strong five-stone pillar reduces the potential of the moyo]. O claimed that the aggressive, large-scale strategy shown in *Dia. 1* would have been more in keeping with Yamashita's style.



Dia. 1: more aggressive

White 24 looks like a typically territory-oriented Hane move, but O also expressed dissatisfaction with it. 'White has enough territory, so I would build centre thickness with a view to influencing the whole board.' He advocated White B.



Dia. 2: a large-scale strategy

Black 27. Black could also keep sente with 1 in *Dia. 2*, then play 3. Building up strength in the centre like this would be a large-scale strategy.

Hane gouges out the top right corner in sente up to 34, then switches to the bottom right corner with 36, which follows the proverb, 'Attach to settle yourself'.

Figure 2 (37-53). A heavy group

After the game, Hane commented that his continuation after 36 was 'facile'. O agreed: 'White 40, 42, and 44 are dubious.' White's group here is heavy and has no room to breathe;

there's also a risk that it and the centre bottom group might be subjected to a splitting attack. Moreover, Black develops a wide position with 45.

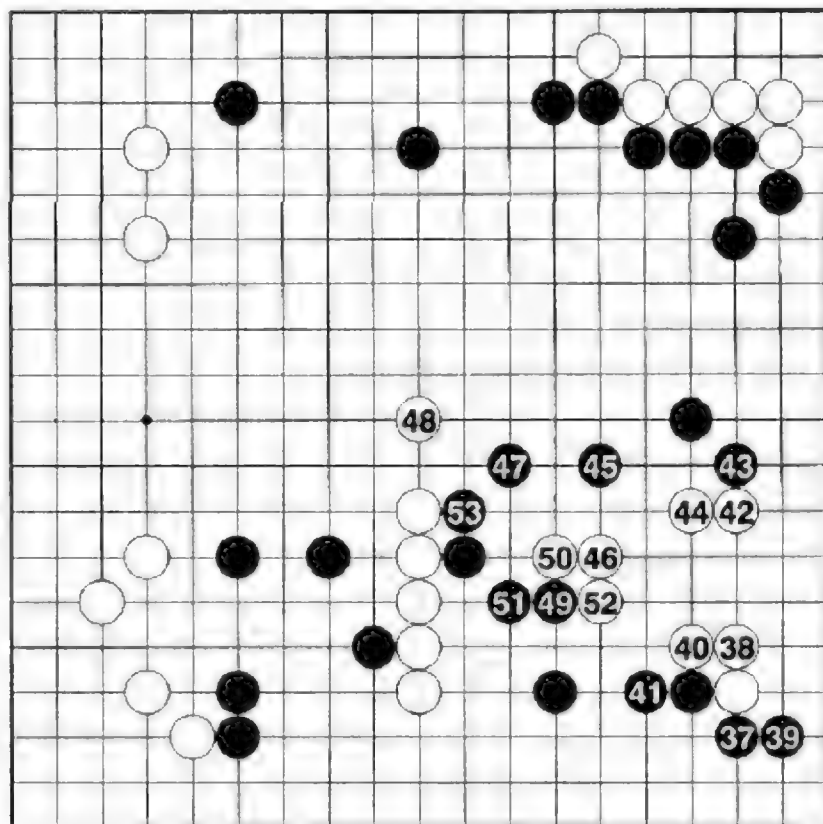
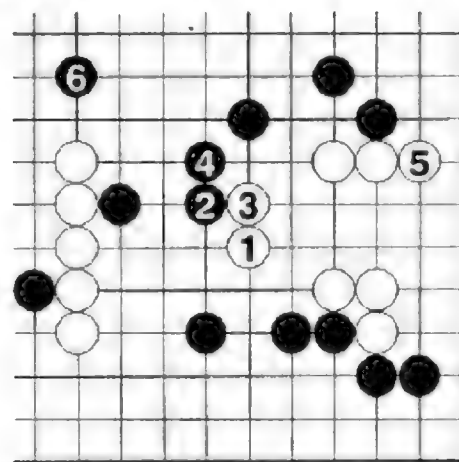
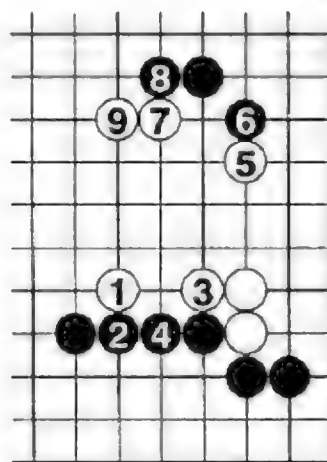


Figure 2 (37-53)



Dia. 3: forcing move Dia. 4: a losing game

Instead of 40, White should have exchanged 1 for 2 in *Dia. 3*; he then forces with 3. If Black 6, he settles his group lightly with 7, getting a result superior to that in the game.

White 46 is natural, but Hane invested 46 minutes on it, which shows how tough his position was. There's no other suitable move. White 1 in *Dia. 4*, for example, is bad style. White is forced to live in gote with 5, but suffering the cap at 6 gives him a lost game.

Black 47 is the proper move. White 48 is the key point for both sides. In effect, Yamashita has ordered White to play there.

Black now launches an attack with 49. Black 51, keeping White separated, is severe. However, Black's next move caused amazement in the pressroom. 'What a stylish move! A player who can play a move like this is not in bad form. I'm impressed,' said O. 'It eliminates all the opponent's aims and increases one's own aims.'

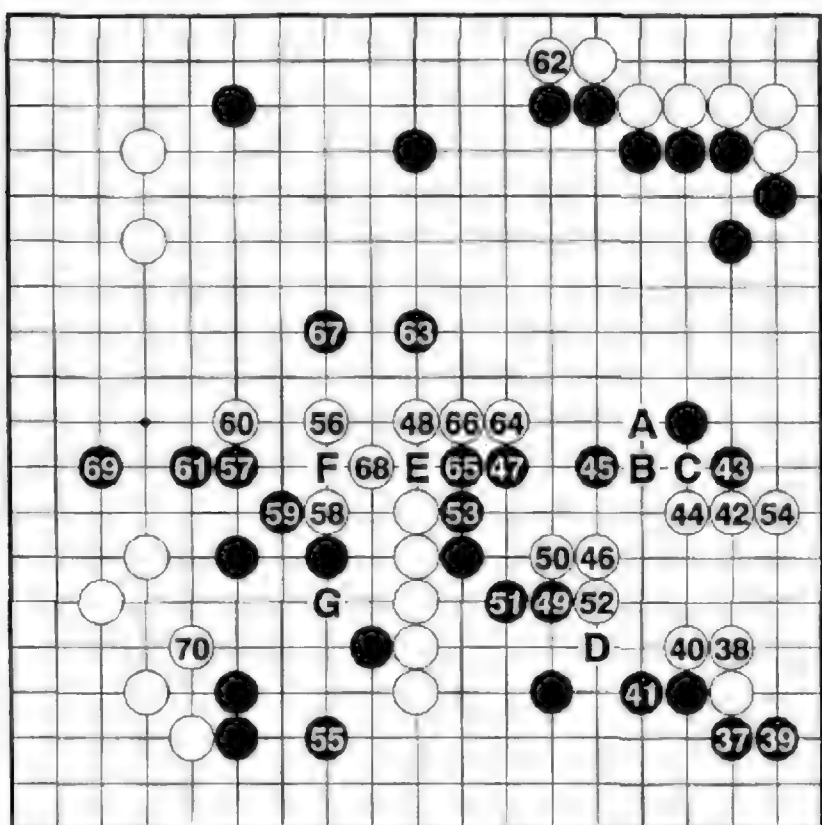
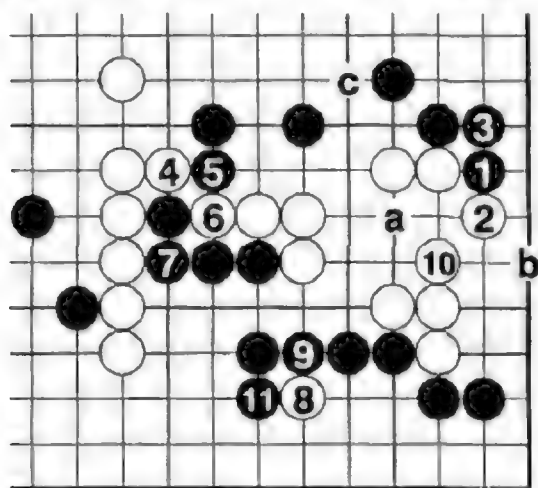


Figure 3 (53-70) (53 repeated)



Dia. 5: satisfactory

Figure 3 (53-70). Black goes on the attack.

Black 53 helps guard against the cut of White A-Black B-White C and also defends against White D. It also creates threats at Black E and Black 56. It's a flexible, thick move, typical of Yamashita, but at the same time it doesn't take any actual profit, so it could also become the losing move if it doesn't work effectively.

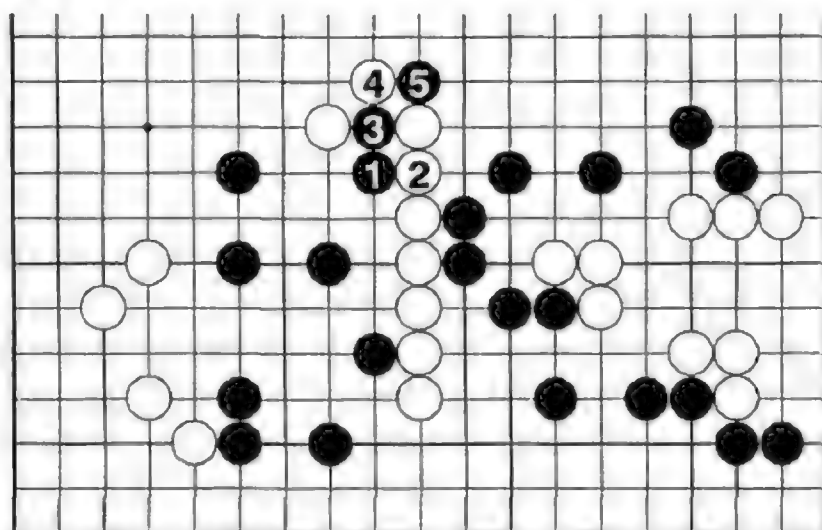
The usual strategy here would be to take profit with the hane at 1 in *Dia. 5*. If White tenukies after 11, he has to answer Black 'a' by living with 'b'. That makes White short of liberties, so White 'c' is no longer a potent threat. This result would be satisfactory for Black.

White 54 was the sealed move. The group doesn't die even if White tenukies, but Hane presumably considered 54 a big move in the whole-board context.

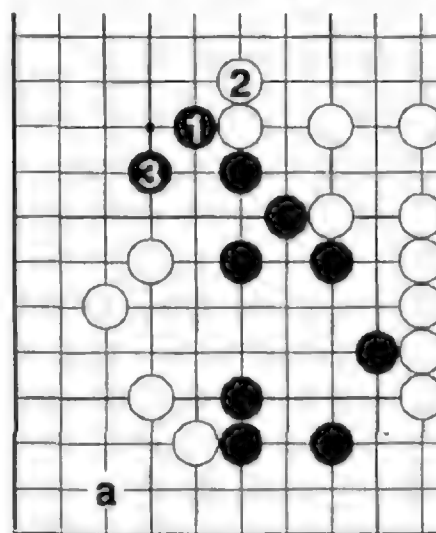
Black 55 is not a purely defensive move: it aims at attacking at the centre bottom and bottom left.

White 58. Hane plays cautiously because he is wary of Yamashita's power. This move defends against the attack shown in *Dia. 6*; the

drawback of 58 is that it lets Black make good shape with 59.



Dia. 6: a strong attack

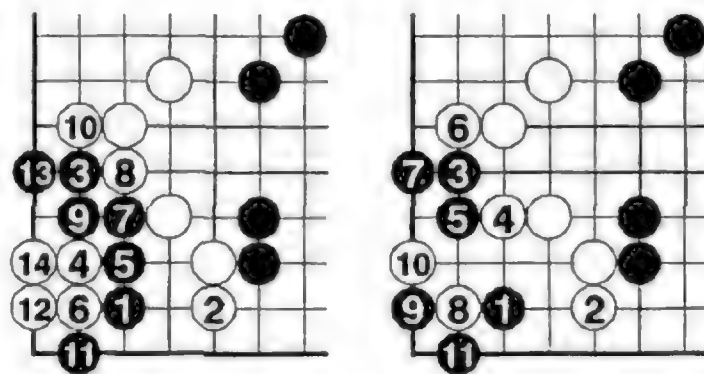


Dia. 7: giving White good shape

Black 61. If at 1 in *Dia. 7*, then after 3 Black can aim at the severe attack of 'a', but Yamashita dislikes helping White to defend at 2.

Satisfied with the forcing move of 60, White switches to 62 at the top. Hane presumably believed that he couldn't take the lead in territory if he permitted Black to block here. Of course, he must have realized that Yamashita would welcome the invitation to attack at 63.

White 68 is a very patient move. It forestalls the atari of F and aims at the counterattack of G. O praised it lavishly: 'If White wins, this move will have a place in go history.'



Dia. 8: White loses Dia. 9: ko, but...

White 70 is an aggressive answer to Black 69. If White ignores Black, the placement of 1 in *Dia. 8* will be severe. White can set up a *gomoku nakade* (five-stone large eye) up to 14, but this

gives Black enough liberties to win the capturing race. (If White 6 at 9, Black 8.) As O put it, 'The operation succeeds, but the patient dies.' Instead of 4 —

Dia. 9. White 4 etc. here give White a ko, but he has few ko threats.

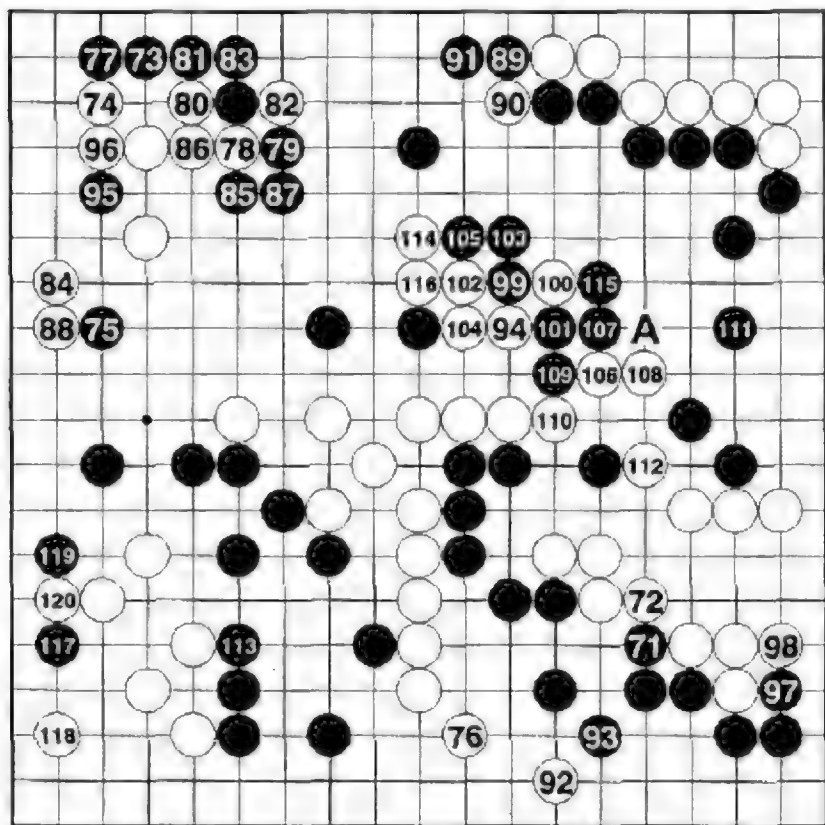
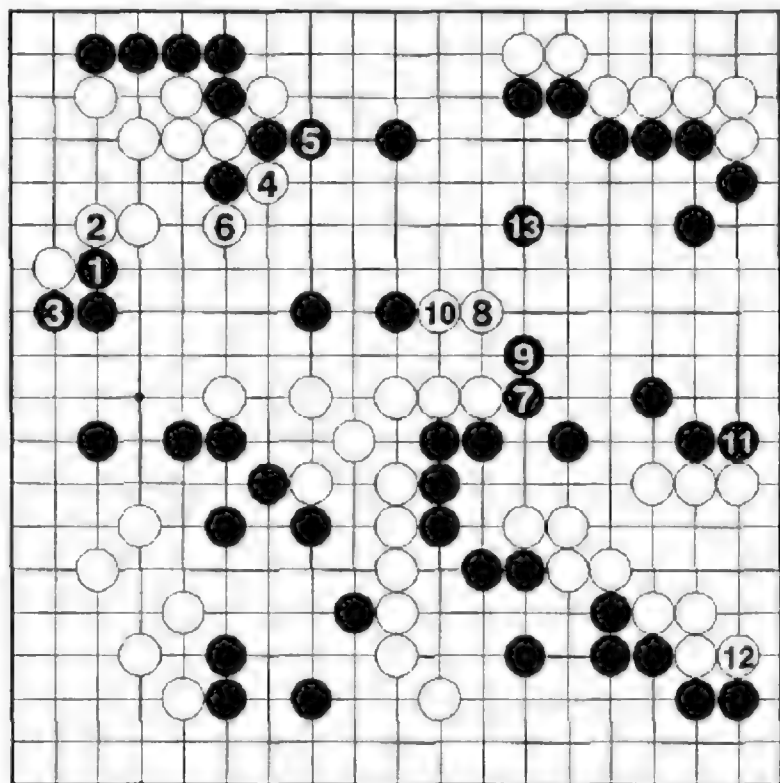


Figure 4 (71-120)



Dia. 10: Black wins

Figure 4 (71-120). Missed chances

Yamashita takes profit with 73 and 75, which use his thickness in the background to attack White. The latter plays 76 to enrich the eye shape of his group, but Hane regretted this move. 'Going all out with White 77, resigning myself to being attacked, was the only move.'

White 84. Extending at 85 is the natural move, but Hane gives priority to securing life immediately.

Black 87. According to Otake Hideo 9-dan,

who was the referee, Black missed a simple way to wrap up a win.

Dia. 10. Black should first secure his left-side position with 1 and 3. After White 4 and 6, Black plays 7, which is not an obvious move, as it attempts to make territory in an area where Black is open at the side; nonetheless, it's a good move. Black does get to enclose this area with 11 and 13. O Meien agreed that this would have given Black the lead.

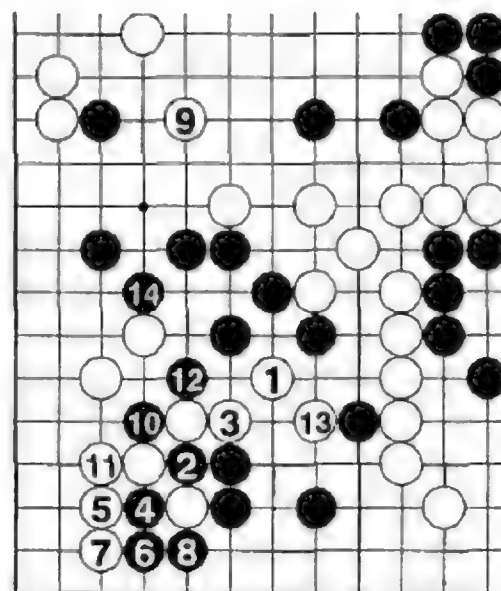
In the game, Black becomes thin when White crawls at 88.

When Black expands his moyo with 89, White has to come in.

Black is thin both at the top and on the left side, so White now seems to have a good chance of catching up.

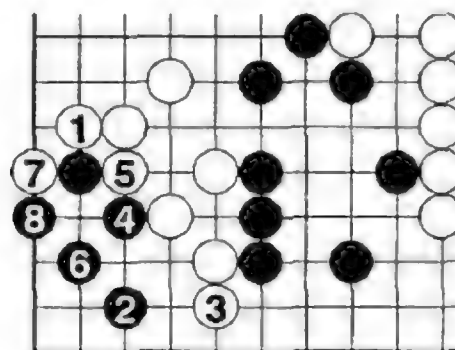
Black 101 is the strongest move, but up to 112 White succeeds in separating Black into two. He hopes to take profit by harassing the bottom right black group.

Black 113 is too cautious. O advocated going all out by enclosing the top right with A. If White attacks in the bottom left with 1 in *Dia. 11*, Black lives at the bottom up to 8. If White attacks the left-side group with 9, Black should be able to settle it.



Dia. 11: Black can survive

Black invades at 117 to make 113 look good. He is able to gouge out some of the corner. Note that White can't play 118 at 1 in *Dia. 12*, as Black can get a ko.



Dia. 12: bad for White

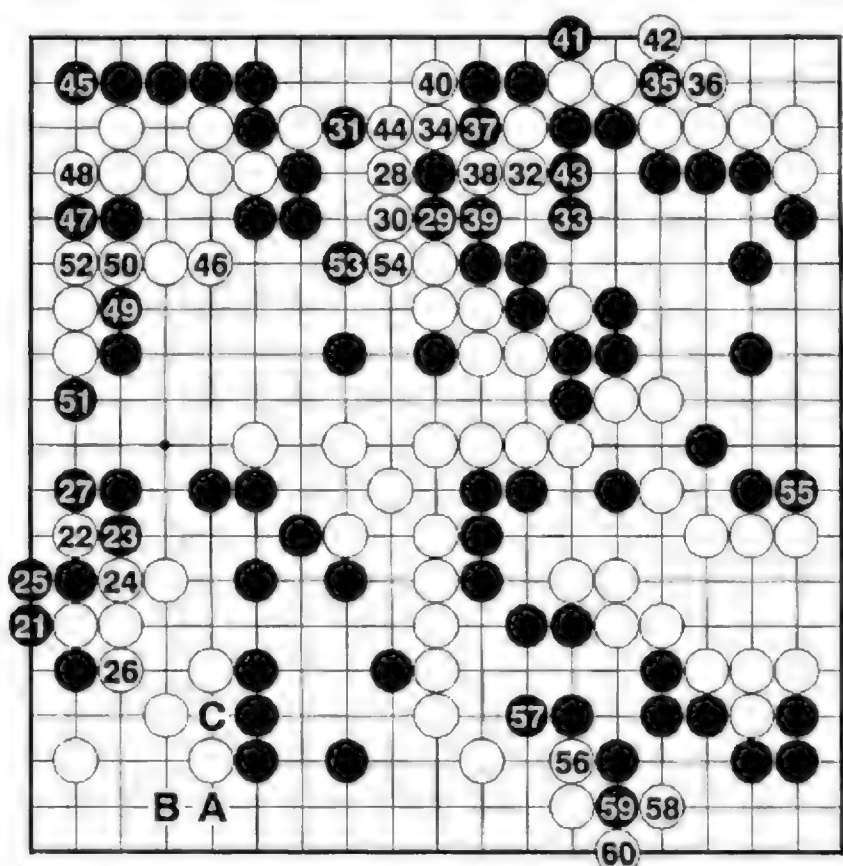
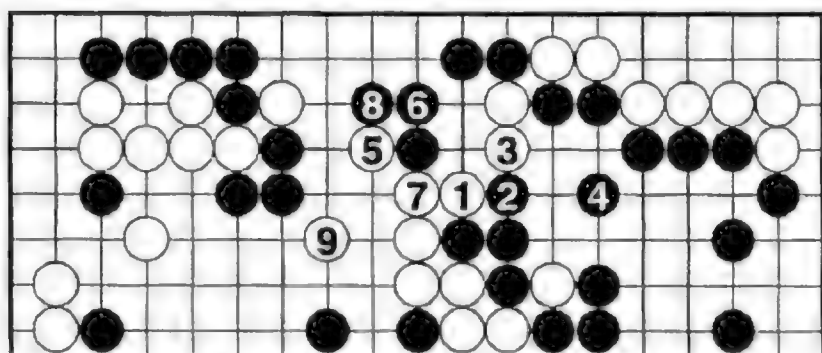


Figure 5 (121-160)



Dia. 13: better for White

Figure 5 (121-160). Hane's careless move

White 28 is a tesuji, but White should have forced with 1 in *Dia. 13* first. In the continuation, Black actually gets more territory than in the game, but the value of White 9 surpasses it, besides which White isn't left with the cutting point at 54 in the figure.

White 46 is careless: White should hane at 47 and make sure of the life of the group.

Black 47 is severe: suddenly White's eye shape looks shaky. Black 51 becomes sente, but even after 52 White still doesn't have two eyes. Perhaps Hane underestimated the severity of this attack.

Black puts his attack aside for the moment, switching to 55. According to O, he should first hane at A, forcing White B, then atari at C — this gains two points over the game. It would put Black about nine points ahead on the board.

Figure 6 (161-200). Slips by Black

Black 67. Black is trying to wrap up the game, but this lets White make definite eye shape. It would be better to threaten the group by playing at 89, which would virtually be sente.

White 70. The game is now very close.

Black 77 is worth seven points; the reverse sente move of Black 90, worth five points, is bigger.

Black has made two slips, so it's not surprising that the game is very close.

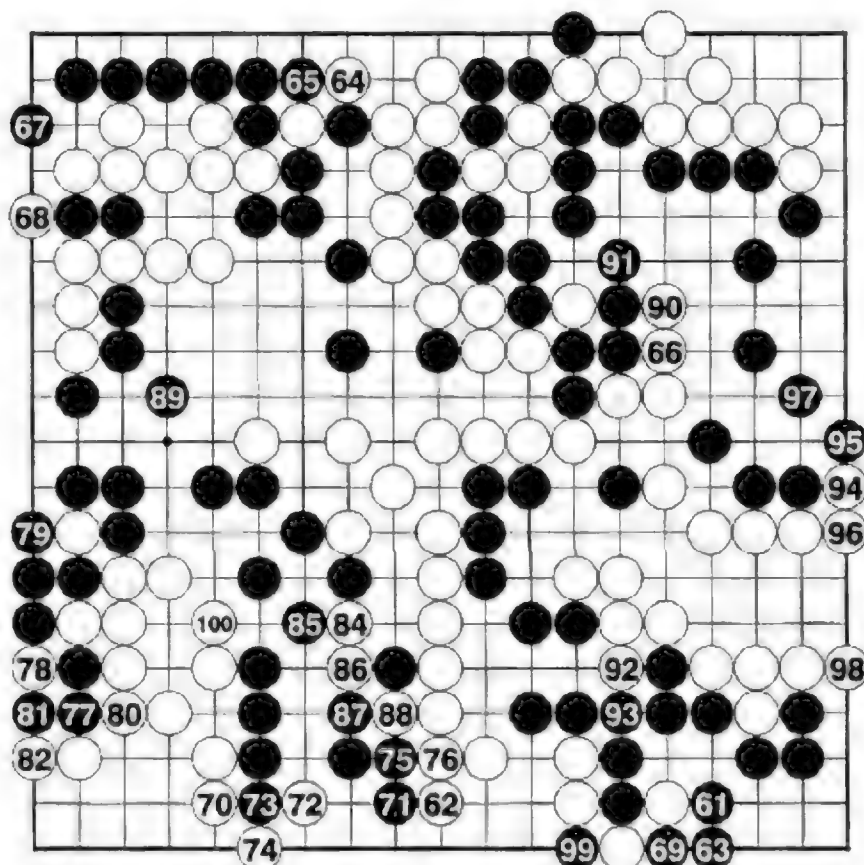
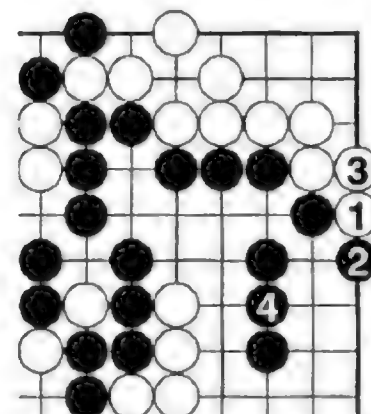


Figure 6 (161-200)

83: connects



Dia. 14: Hane's last chance

White 94. If White plays 1 and 3 in *Dia. 14*, Black has no choice but to defend at 4, so White gains a point. That means that he might have won by half a point.

Figure 7 (201-266). Still Kisei

The small slips mentioned above are perhaps inevitable when players are under time pressure (both went into the final minute of byo-yomi at some point in Figure 6). He may have had his share of luck, but Yamashita just barely managed to hang on to a lead in what was a very important game for him.

Yamashita: 'At any rate, I've put an end to my losing streak. I'm relieved.'

For at least another week he was still the number one.

Black wins by ½ point.

(From a commentary in the *Yomiuri Newspaper*)

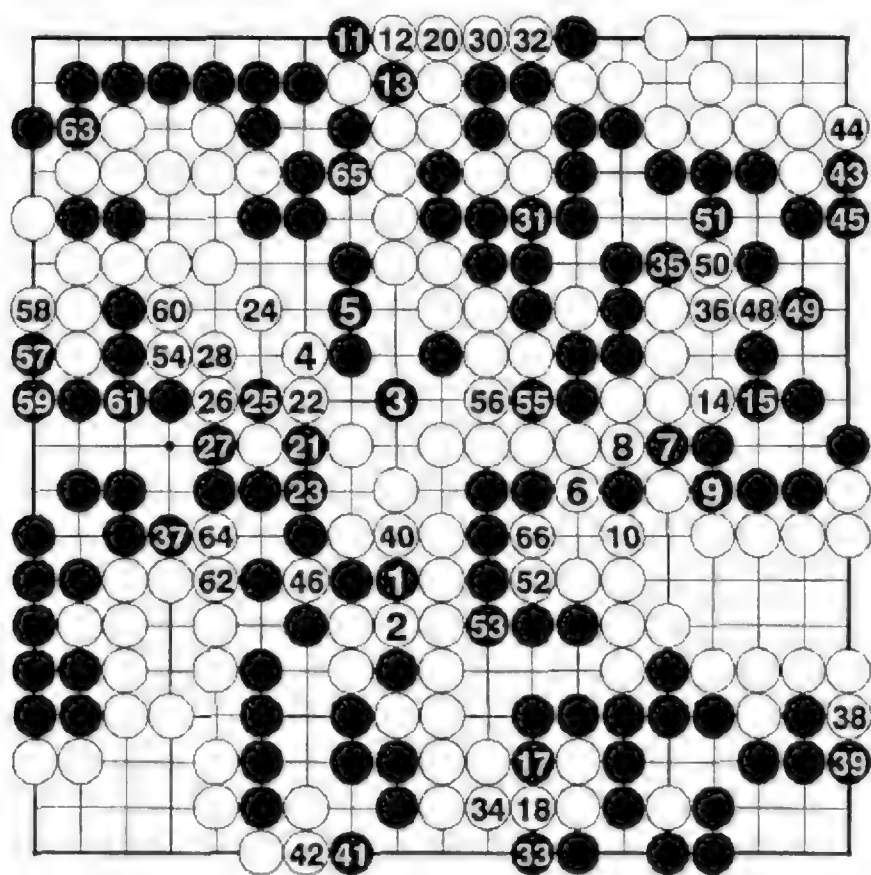


Figure 7 (201-266)

16, 19: ko; 29: connects (left of 13);
47: retakes (right of 46)

Game Five: Back in business

White: Yamashita Keigo

Black: Hane Naoki

Played in Hakone on 25, 26 February 2004.

Commentary by Yoda Norimoto Meijin. Report by Sekine Shingo.

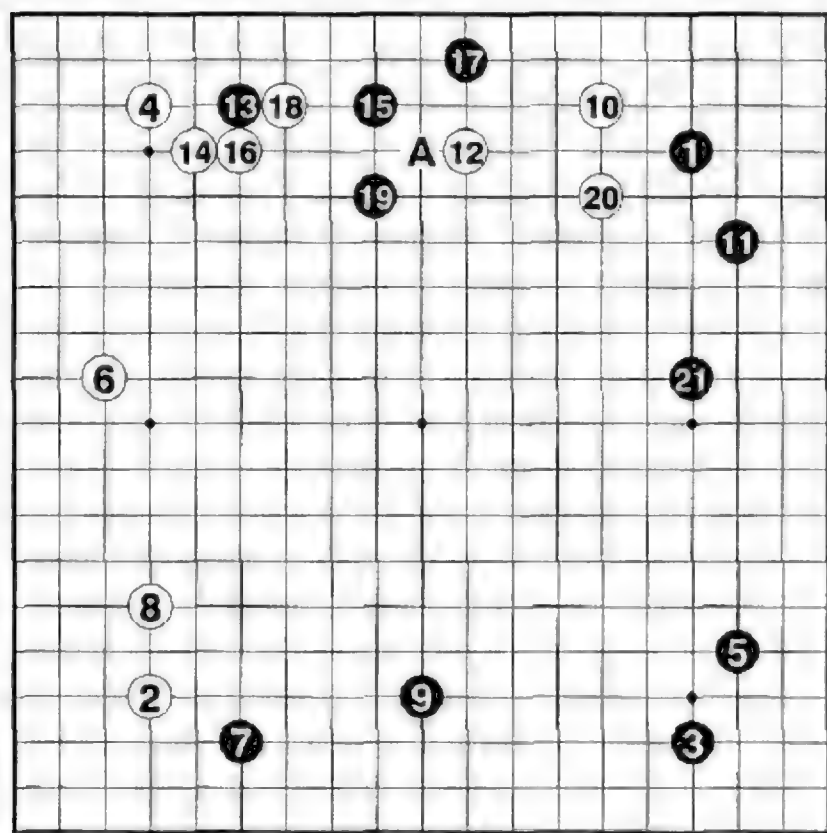
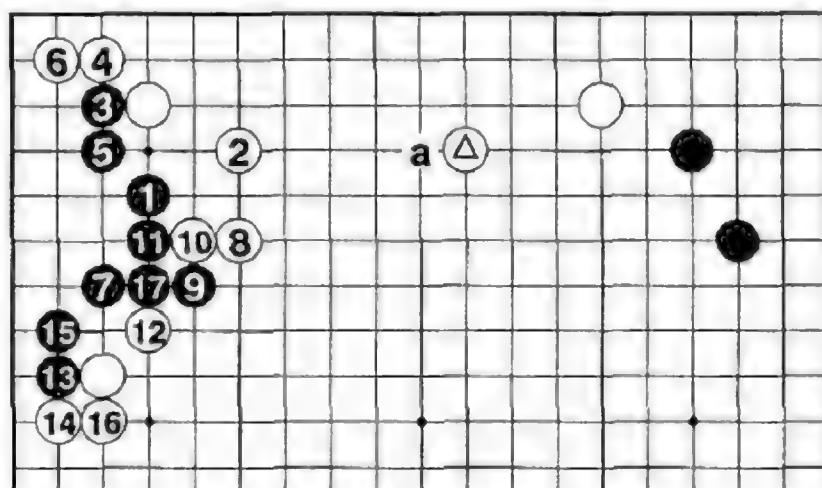


Figure 1 (1-21)

Figure 1 (1-21). Favourite patterns

Both players start off with patterns they are familiar with. Hane likes the solid opening of 1 to 5, which is also favoured by O Rissei and Kobayashi Koichi. Yamashita's low Chinese Opening is a little unusual with white, but it fits his predilection for attack.

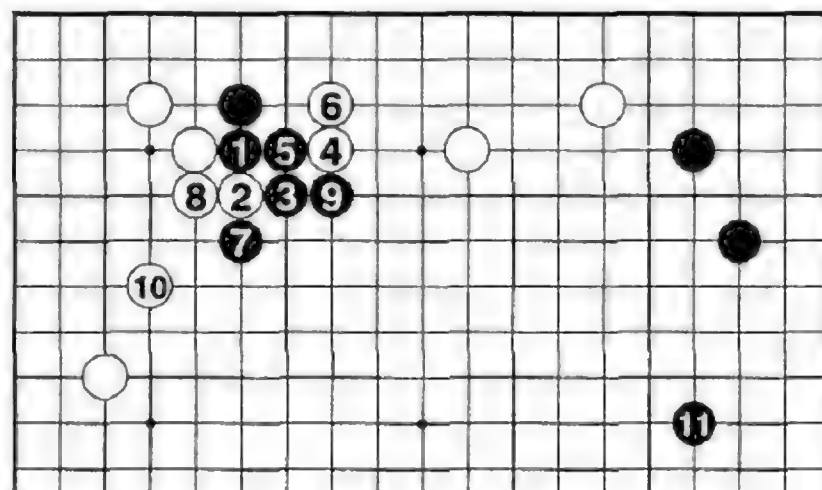
Hane spent a lot of time on 11: 48 minutes. He usually plays slowly in the opening: he doesn't begrudge the time when he's at a strategic turning point. Perhaps he also considered pincers such as Black 12 or Black A.



Dia. 1: what White wants

White 12 is an interesting twist. The wider extension of A is often seen, but Yamashita is putting in 'an order'. If Black makes an approach move in the top left, the usual move is 1 in *Dia. 1*, after which the continuation to 17 is a set sequence. In this result, however, White's marked stone is better located here than at 'a', as it is more distant from White's own thickness.

That's why Black makes the irregular approach move of 13. It's not so much that *Dia. 1* is bad for Black; rather that he dislikes following White's orders.



Dia. 2: White plays on both sides

Black 15. Black could also push down with 1 in *Dia. 2*. It looks like a reasonable game, according to Yoda, but White goes all out on both left and right, which may not be to Black's liking.

Yamashita takes a firm grip on Black 13 with 18. Takemiya Masaki, the commentator for the satellite-TV coverage of the game [usually an hour in the morning and an hour in the afternoon on the first day and often longer on the second day, for people who don't have to go to work], appeared surprised. 'The only move that would occur to me is capping at White 19,' he said.

White builds thickness with 18 and 20 and waits for a chance to attack Black. On seeing these moves, Yoda commented: 'Yamashita seems to be completely back in form.'

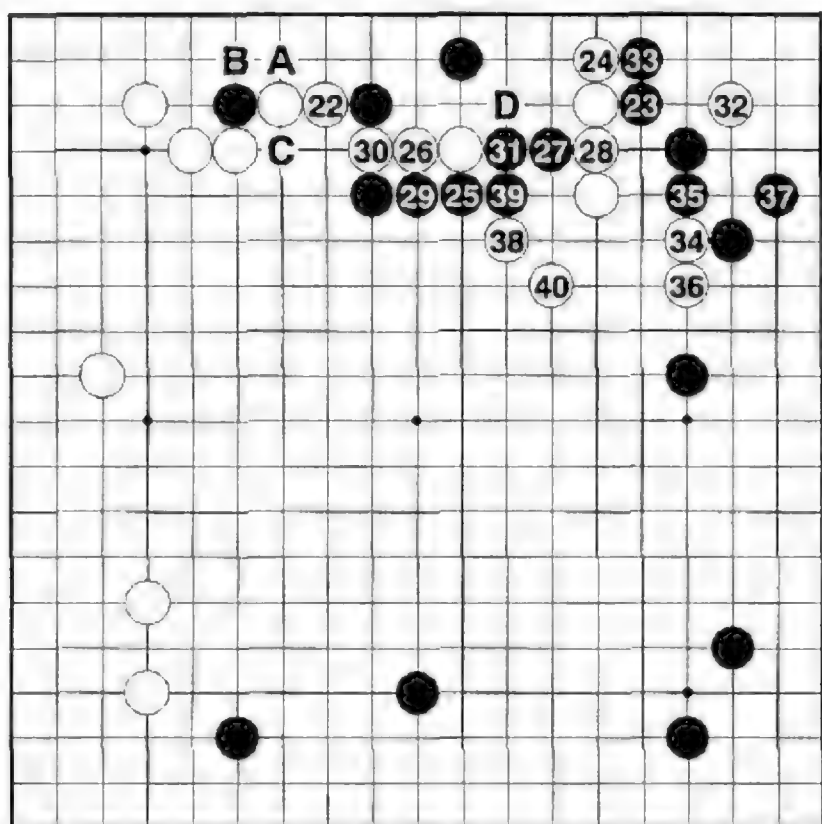
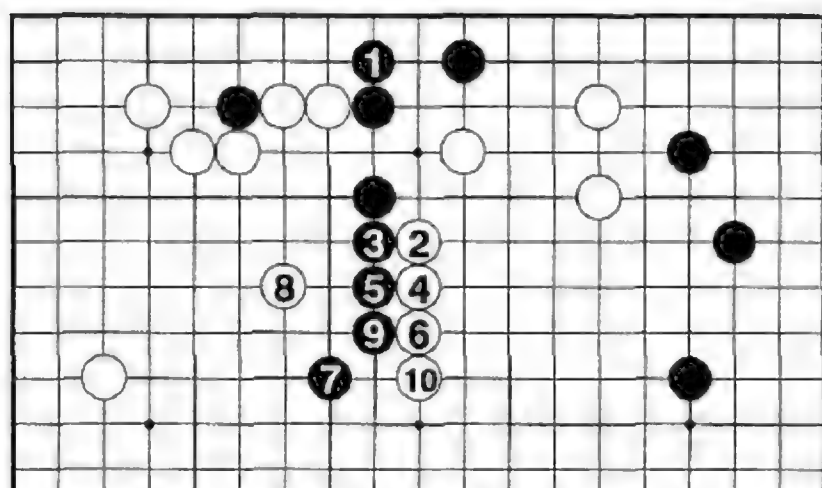


Figure 2 (22-40)



Dia. 3: submissive

Figure 2 (22-40). A tough fight for Black

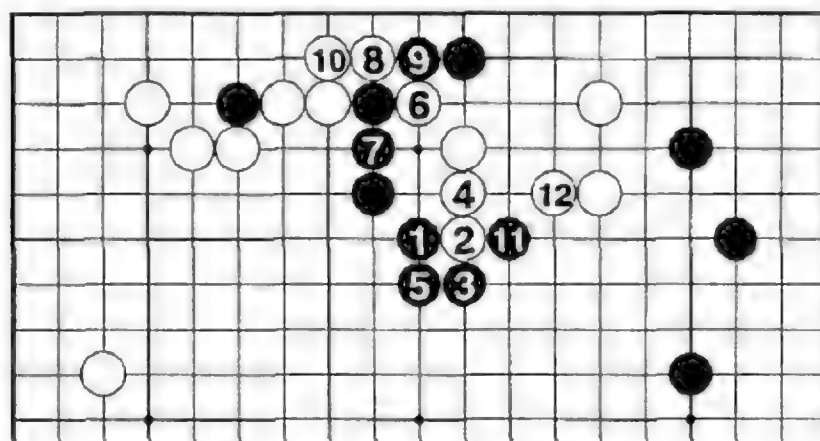
White 22 is a stubborn move that caused surprise in the pressroom, where Yoda, Takagi Shoichi, Takemiya Masaki and others were studying the game. It looks a little heavy, but the aim is to forestall forcing moves such as Black A-White B and Black C or Black 22.

Black 23. Black 1 in *Dia. 3* would make White 22 a forcing move. White presses at 2 and moves into the centre up to 10; his moves naturally reduce Black's bottom moyo.

Another possibility for 23 is shown in *Dia. 4*. White 2 and 4, making miai of 5 and 6, look like a good counter. If Black defends in the centre with 5, White gets a large territory at the top.

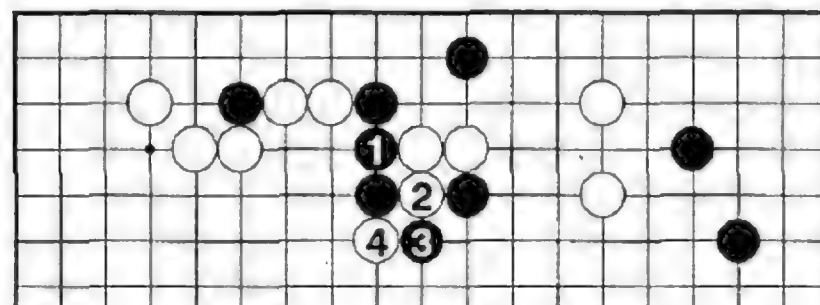
In short, finding a good answer to 22 is not easy. As the professionals in the pressroom reviewed it, their evaluation changed from 'a heavy move' to 'a powerful attack'. However,

White 26 also took them by surprise — they had looked at the hane at 39 and concluded it gave White a reasonable result.



Dia. 4: good for White

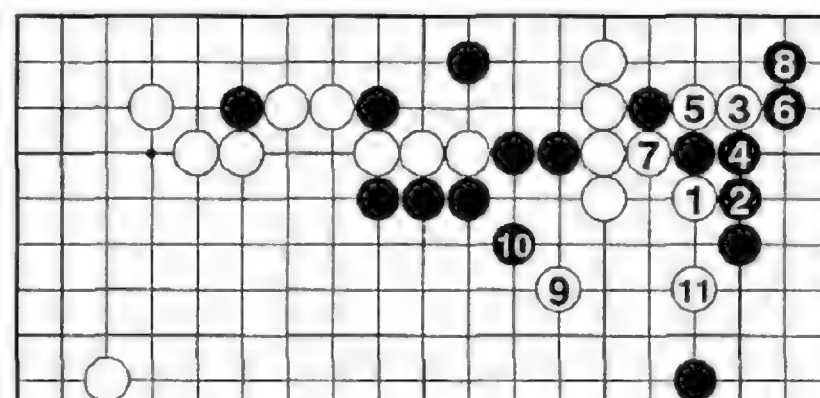
White 26 is easy to overlook: it seems to be bad style, as connecting at 1 in *Dia. 5* makes a strong shape. However, in this case, White 2 and 4 are a severe follow-up; this fight is more than Black can handle.



Dia. 5: a tough fight for Black

Black desperately counters with 27 to 31, but this leaves cutting points at 39 and D. Yoda commented: 'Black hasn't made shape. The game has tilted towards White.'

White 32 is a little surprising. Yoda expected Yamashita to attach at 1 in *Dia. 6* first; if White invades at the 3-3 after 2, then the continuation here is likely. After 9 and 11, White's group is much stronger than the centre top black group, so White has the lead.

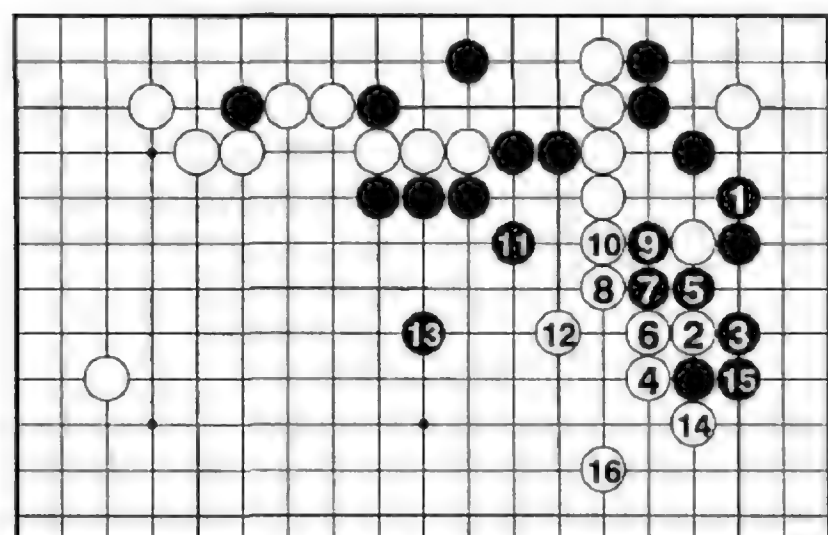


Dia. 6: good for White

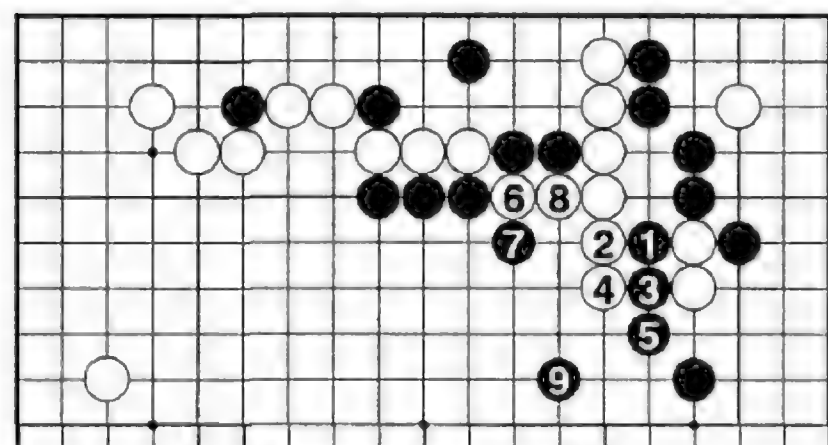
When White invades immediately at 32, blocking at 33 is natural. White 34 shows that Yamashita's main concern is with strengthening his group rather than with the corner; of course, the corner stone also has a lot of aji and proves to be useful later.

Black 35 was played by Hane after just seven minutes' thought. This is a critical juncture of the game, so it might have been advisable to take more time over it. According to Yoda, Black 1 in *Dia. 7* is far superior. Yamashita commented after the game that he planned to answer 1 by walling off the centre with 2. Yoda: 'Black should solidify the corner with 3 to 5, making the white stone a complete *mochikomi* [loss without compensation]. Skirmishing will continue at the top, but the profit Black takes in the top right corner makes this better for Black than in the game.'

Black 37 was the sealed move at the end of the first day. This move was one everyone expected — in fact, it looks like the only move — but Yoda started saying something funny in the pressroom the next morning. 'I had another think about the sealed-move position last night. Whatever he does, Black is in a tough position. Perhaps the only thing he can do is to hane at 1 in *Dia. 8*.'



Dia. 7: a wiser policy



Dia. 8: Yoda style

Dia. 8. If 1, White 2 and 4 are sente, so White can cut at 6, but Yoda is well aware of this. His strategy is to jettison the stones at the top, being satisfied with the corner profit and the expansion of the right-side moyo.

One comment one can make is that this kind of bold sacrifice is Yoda's forte, but that a player who emphasizes balance like Hane might be reluctant to give up so much. The patient move

of 37 is more in keeping with his style. The only problem is that patient moves don't work so well when you are behind.

Yamashita gets into his stride with 38 and 40.

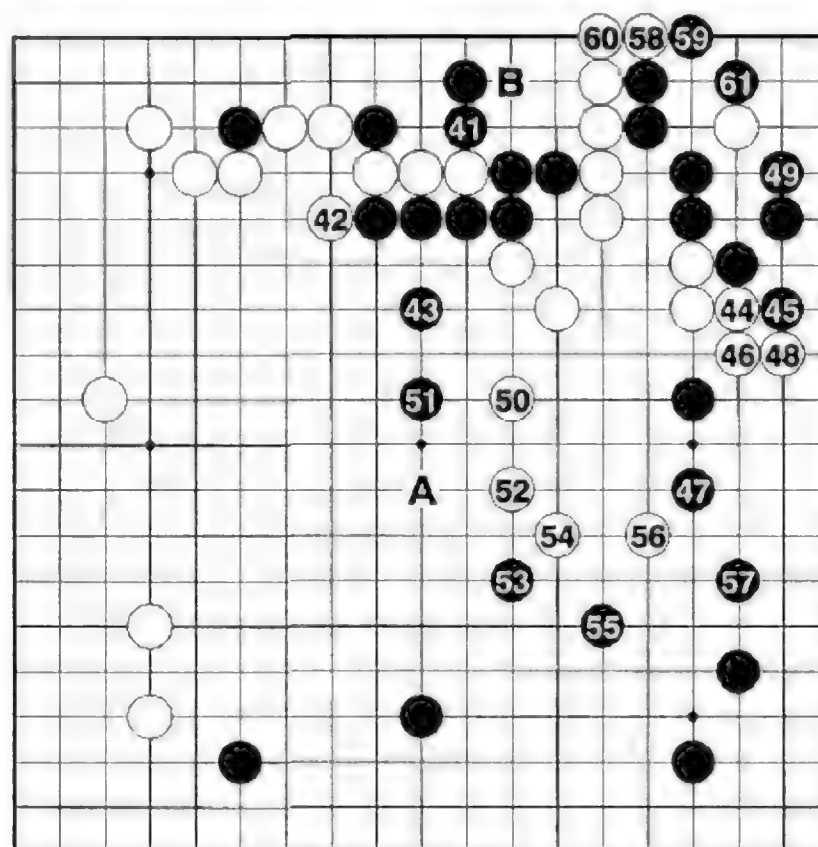
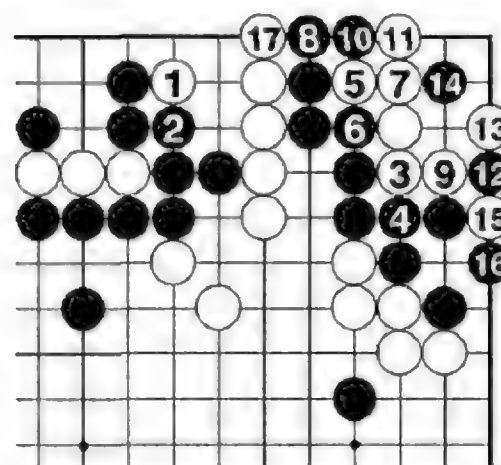


Figure 3 (41-61)



Dia. 9: corner threat

Figure 3 (41-61). White takes the lead.

Thanks to the 3-3 stone, blocking at White 48 is sente. If Black ignores it, White can cause bad trouble in the corner. After the sequence to 17 in *Dia. 9*, Black gets a favourable one-move approach-move ko. 'Favourable', yes, but he has no good ko threats, so 49 is forced.

After the game, Yamashita commented that he thought he had taken the lead at this stage. Yoda: 'Comparing the bottom black position and the left-side white position, the latter is much richer. On top of that, Black has an unsettled group at the top. White has a big lead.'

Black 53. The usual move would be jumping to A, but White would jump to 53: this would be handing the game to White on a silver platter.

White 58 and 60 are shrewd moves. Next, White B will be sente, so White gets a reserve eye here. If this group avoids coming under pressure, White has a sure win.



With this win, Yamashita is well and truly back in the match. Yoda Norimoto joins in the game review.

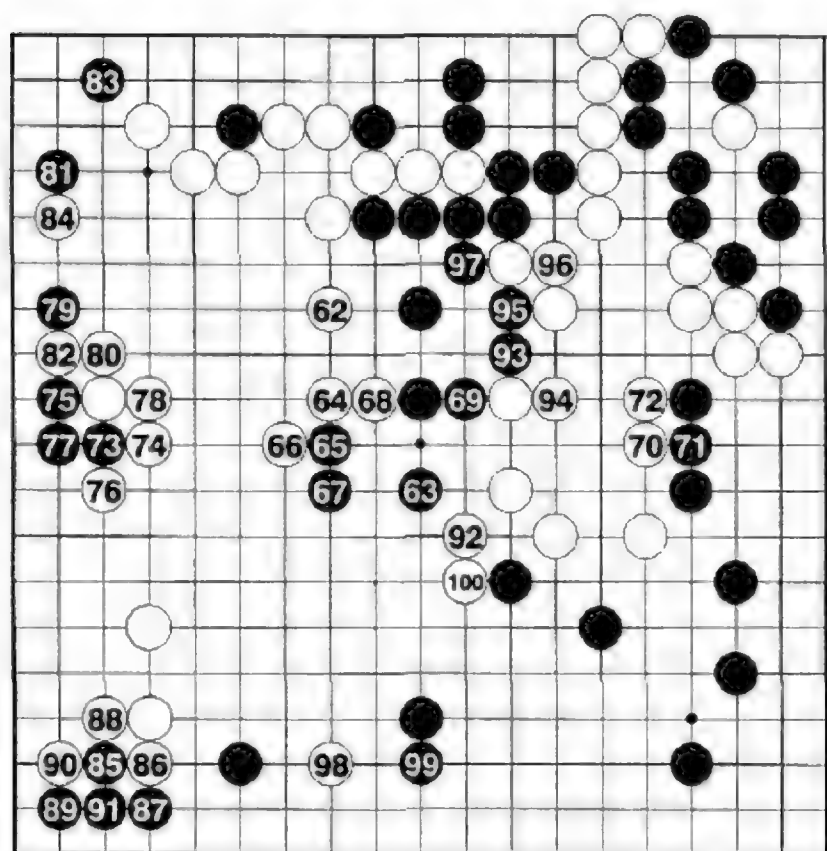


Figure 4 (62-100)

Figure 4 (62-100). A safe lead

Black 73. Normal moves are not enough, though it's a bit late in the piece to hope to turn the game around. A player in the pressroom made an interesting comment: 'For the sake of the sixth game, Hane has to show that he's not a pushover.'

White 84 is a calm move. It leaves Black with the option of doing something in the corner, but that is not enough to catch up.

Figure 5 (101-156). Cruising to a win

White 12. Securing the top left corner with 19 is bigger, according to Yoda. If Black then blocks at 12, White can pull out his stone at the

bottom with A; if instead Black plays at 33, then White plays at 12. Either way, White would be way ahead. In fact, Black might resign.

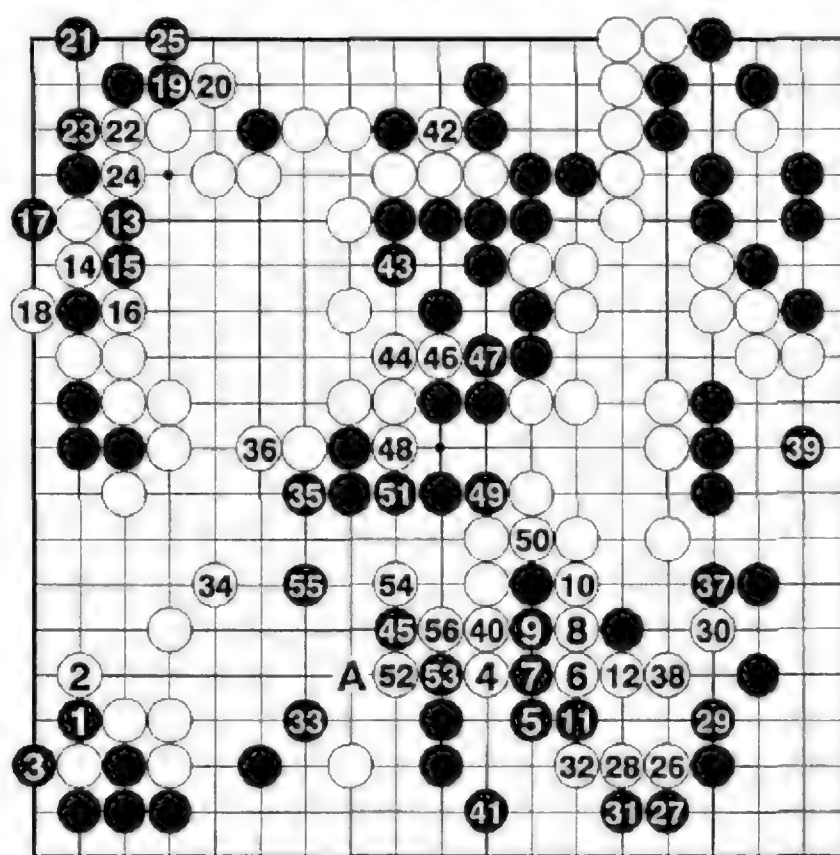
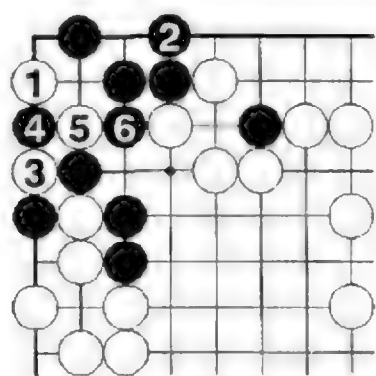


Figure 5 (101-156)

Not that the result in the game is bad for White: he has no objections to Black's living small with 13 on.

White 22. White could also set up a ko as in *Dia. 10*, but there's no need to.

If the previous game was the one that kept Yamashita alive in the series, this is the game that witnessed his real resurrection. The return in confidence was visible in his play; right from the outset, he was in top gear. Hane admitted later that he messed up the game in the opening.



Dia. 10: ko

On TV, Takemiya predicted that, in view of Yamashita's good form, the series would go to the seventh game.

Black resigns after White 156.

(Adapted from the Yomiuri Newspaper)

Game Six: Yamashita draws level

White: Hane Naoki

Black: Yamashita Keigo

Played in Muika-machi, Niigata Prefecture on 10 & 11 March 2004. Commentary by Kataoka Satoshi 9-dan. Report by Akamatsu Masahiro.

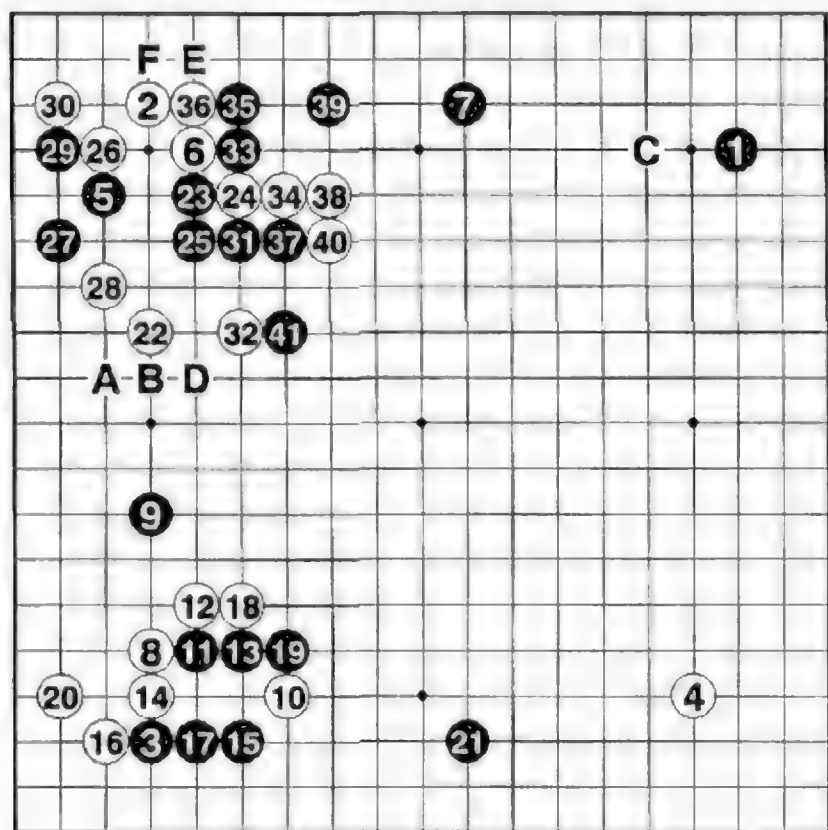
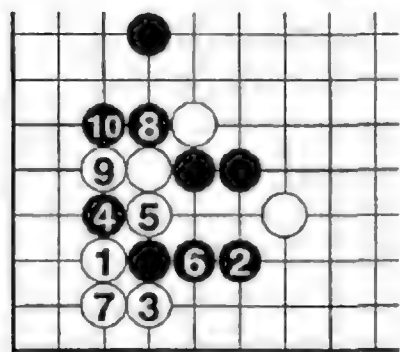
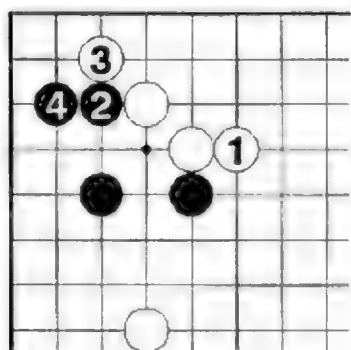


Figure 1 (1-41)



Dia. 1: alternative joseki



Dia. 2: leisurely

Figure 1 (1-41). Severe fighting

The opening to 7 is the same as in Game One of the 29th Tengen title match. Hane lost that

game, which is perhaps why he switched his next move from A to 8.

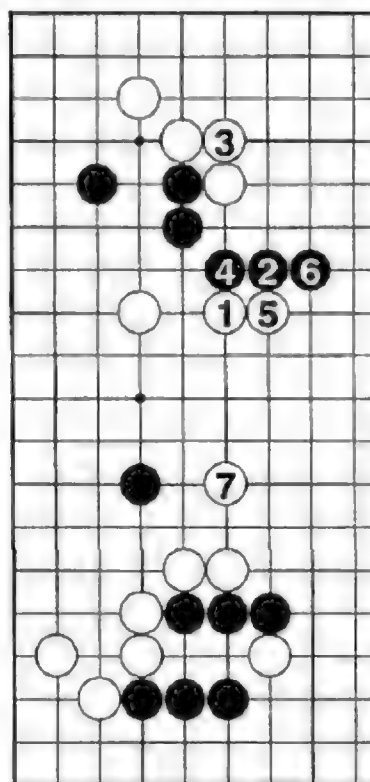
White 14. White could also attach at 1 in Dia. 1. The result to 10 would be reasonable.

White 20. White doesn't descend below 16, as the ladder when Black cuts above 8 is unfavourable.

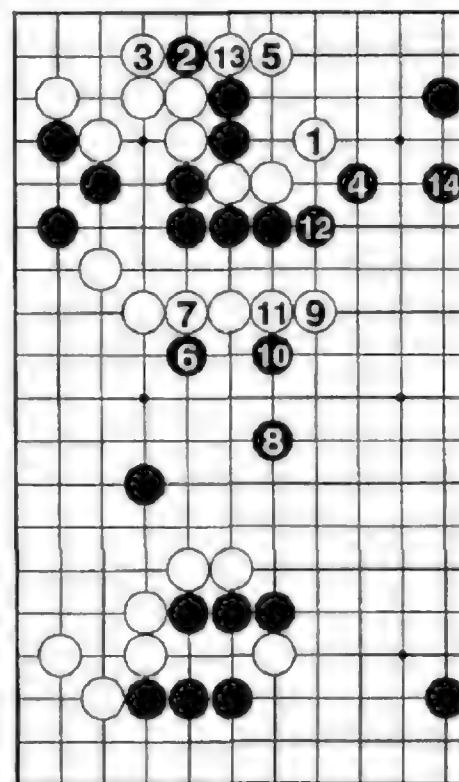
White 22. After 32 minutes' thought, Hane chose the narrower pincer. If instead he played at B, Black might answer at 28. That would also be a reasonable game.

White 24 starts a fight. More leisurely would be White 1 and 3 in Dia. 2, after which White could switch to an approach move at C in the top right.

White 26. Hane regretted not playing the one-space jump of 1 in Dia. 3 instead. According to Kataoka, the continuation to 7 is likely. This would be reasonable for White.



Dia. 3: satisfactory



Dia. 4: better for Black

White 24 and 26 lead to a fight in which White comes under a lot of pressure. White 28, forestalling a black connection along the edge, is a stubborn move.

White 32. If White 34, Black will exchange 37 for White 38, then press at D. That would be unbearable, so White 32 is natural, but then Black 33 is severe. A fight has started in which neither side can back off.

White 36 is the only move.

White 38. If at 1 in Dia. 4, Black will probably discard his stones at the top. The result to 14 looks good for Black.

Black 41. Black should first exchange E for White F, in which case White wouldn't get as many ko threats here as he does later in the game.

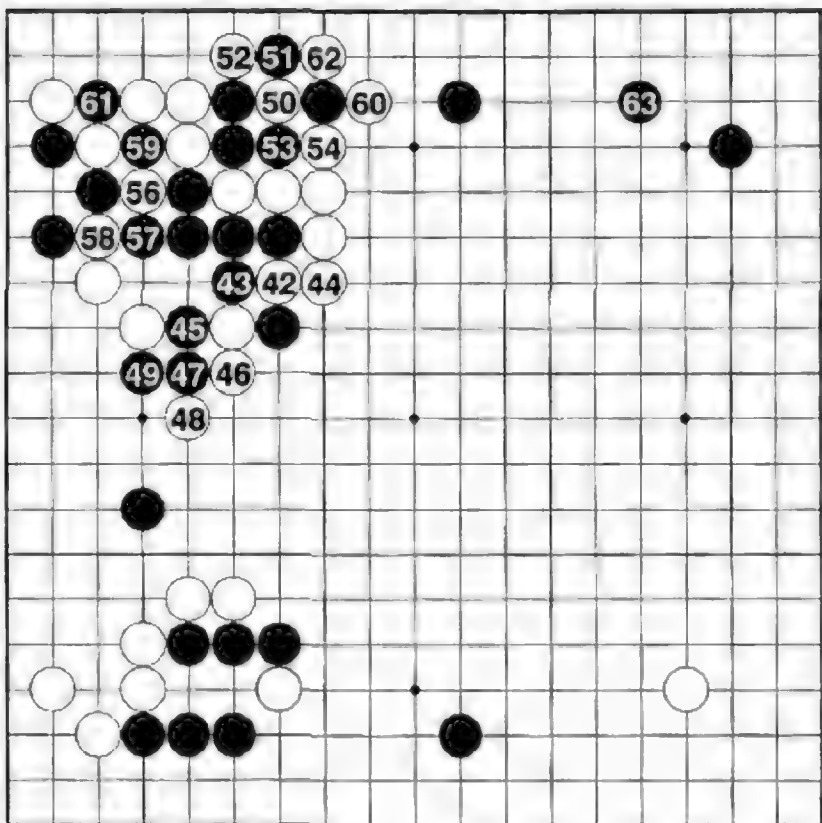
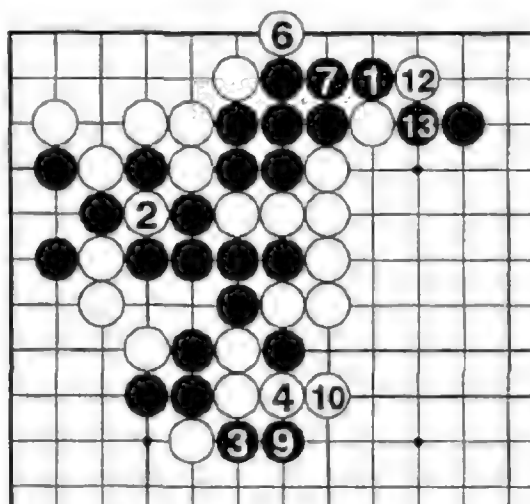
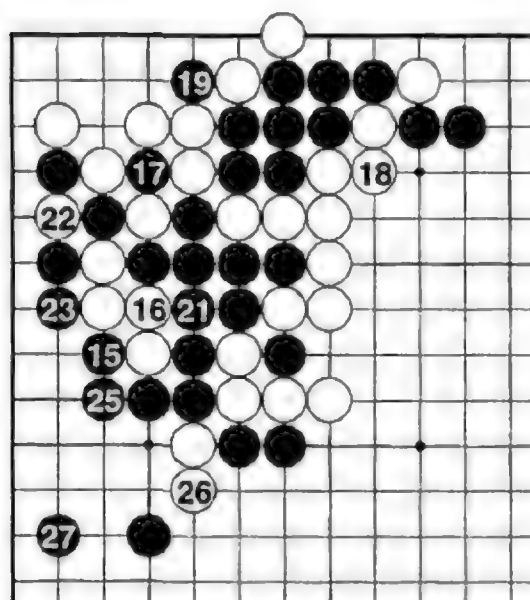


Figure 2 (42-63)
55: connects



Dia. 5: variation
ko: 5, 8, 11, 14



Dia. 6: Black is satisfied
20: ko; 24: connects

Figure 2 (42-63). A large-scale trade

White 42. White seems to have little choice but to wedge in here. The continuation to 49 is forced. White plays 50 to create ko threats: it's the only move.

After squeezing up to 55, White starts a large ko fight with 56 and 58. Black ends the fight

immediately with 61. Kataoka endorsed his judgement.

What happens if Black answers the ko threat of 60? The sequence in *Dia. 5* is more or less inevitable. *Dia. 6* follows. Playing this way might be feasible for Black, according to Kataoka.

Yamashita's opinion of this variation is not on the record, but presumably it was included in his analysis. Who has gained from the large-scale trade in the game? Kojima Takaho 9-dan, the referee, commented that it was slightly favourable for Black. Kataoka thought that it was slightly favourable for White. One could split the difference and say that it was probably even.

Black 63 was the sealed move.

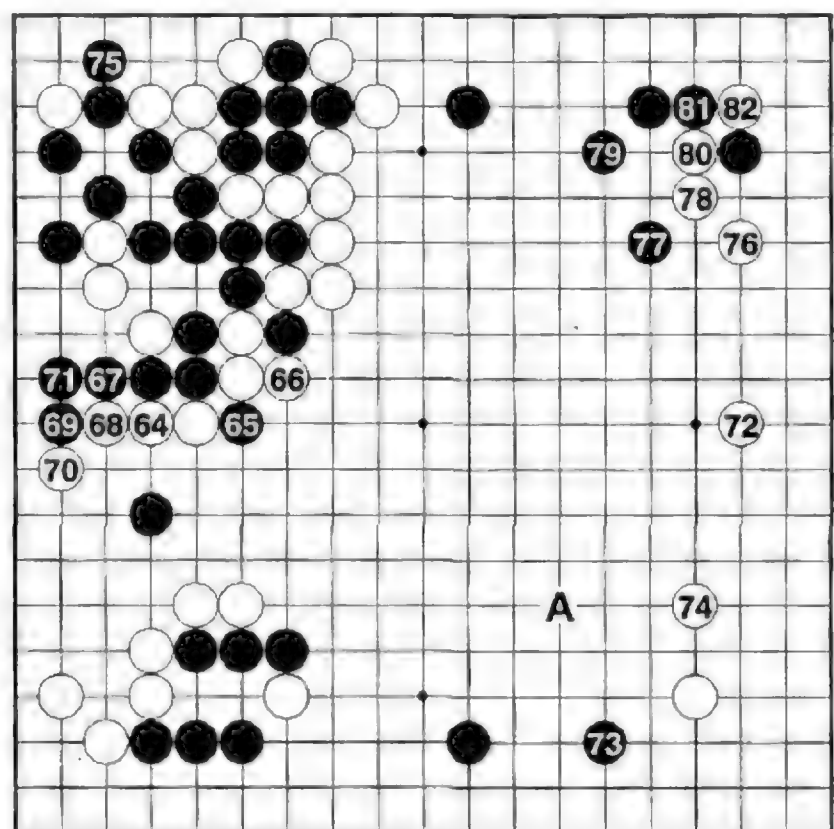
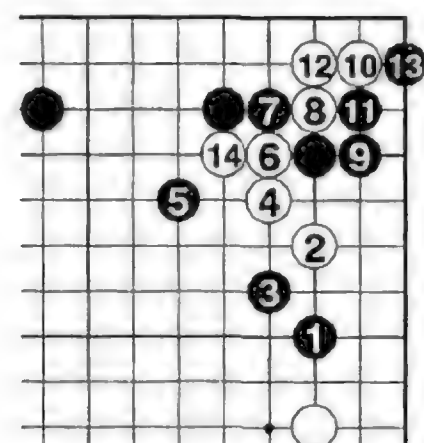


Figure 3 (64-82)



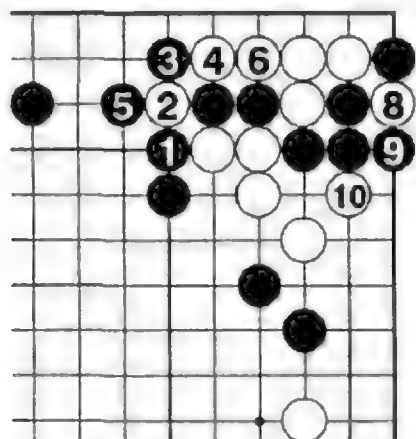
Dia. 7: unreasonable

Figure 3 (64-82). The wrong strategy?

White 64, 68, 70. Even if White later sacrifices these stones, they are forcing moves. With 72, it's back to the fuseki.

Black 75 is worth 23 points. One's first instinct is to extend to 1 in *Dia. 7*, but White will probably counter by invading at 2. Attacking him with 3 and 5 doesn't go well: White cuts in the

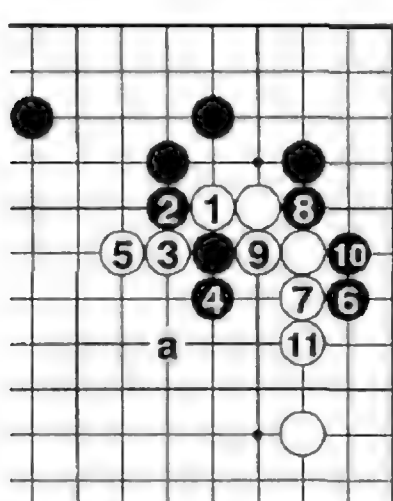
corner with 6 and 8, after which 10 is a good move. After 13, Black can't block after 14. [If he does, White wins the capturing race, as shown in *Dia. 8*.]



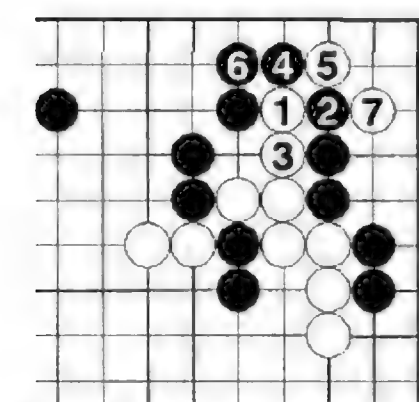
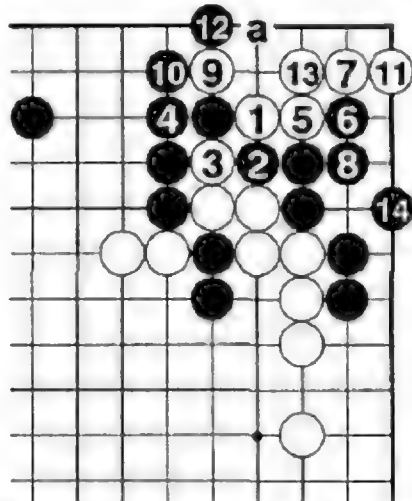
*Dia. 8: Black loses
7: connects*

White 80, 82. The players in the pressroom were dissatisfied with this, claiming it was the wrong *degiri* (push through and cut). They wanted to see White 1 and 3 in *Dia. 9*.

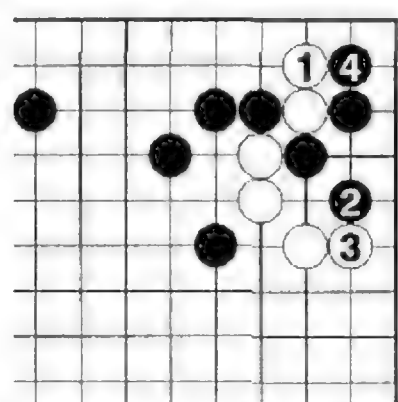
Dia. 9. The moves to 5 are forced. At this point, there's no move for Black that's just right. If 6 at 'a', White defends at 11, and it's not clear what will happen next. After looking at this, someone in the pressroom suggested the placement of 6; Kataoka gave the continuation to 11. Black will now want to switch to the large point of A in the figure, but he has very bad *aji* in the corner. To be specific —



Dia. 9: the right degiri? Dia. 10: good for White



Dia. 11: bad for Black Dia. 12: good for Black



Dia. 10. White 1 is a *tesuji*. If Black intercepts, White plays the well-timed sequence shown here. After 14, White is left with a flower-

viewing *ko* (that is, he has little at stake compared to Black) with 'a', which would be unbearable for Black. Instead of cutting —

Dia. 11. If Black links up with 2 and 4, White cuts with 5 and 7. He will be able to squeeze from below, so this is also bad for Black.

In short, Black might have had a problem on his hands if White had made the *degiri* in the diagram.

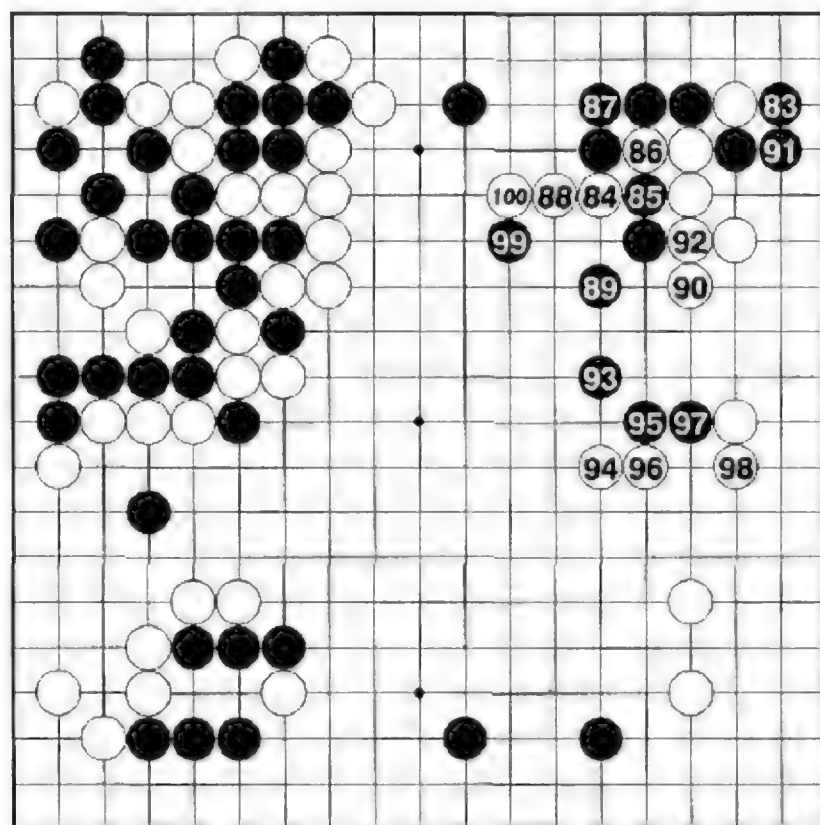


Figure 4 (83-100)

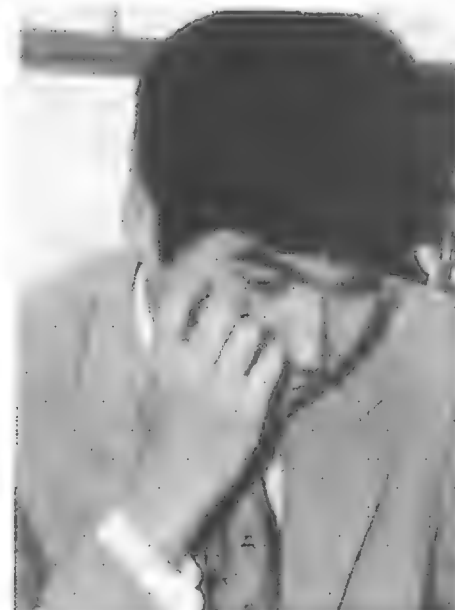
Figure 4 (83-100). A tough fight for White

White 84. If at 1 in *Dia. 12*, Black gets a big corner with 2 and 4.

The moves from 85 to 89 are forced.

When Black leads his stones out with 93, White faces a tough fight, though it is one he initiated. 'It's out of White's control. The game is promising for Black,' commented someone in the pressroom.

White 94 is hopelessly thin, but things would be too easy for Black if he were allowed to play here.



Trouble for Hane

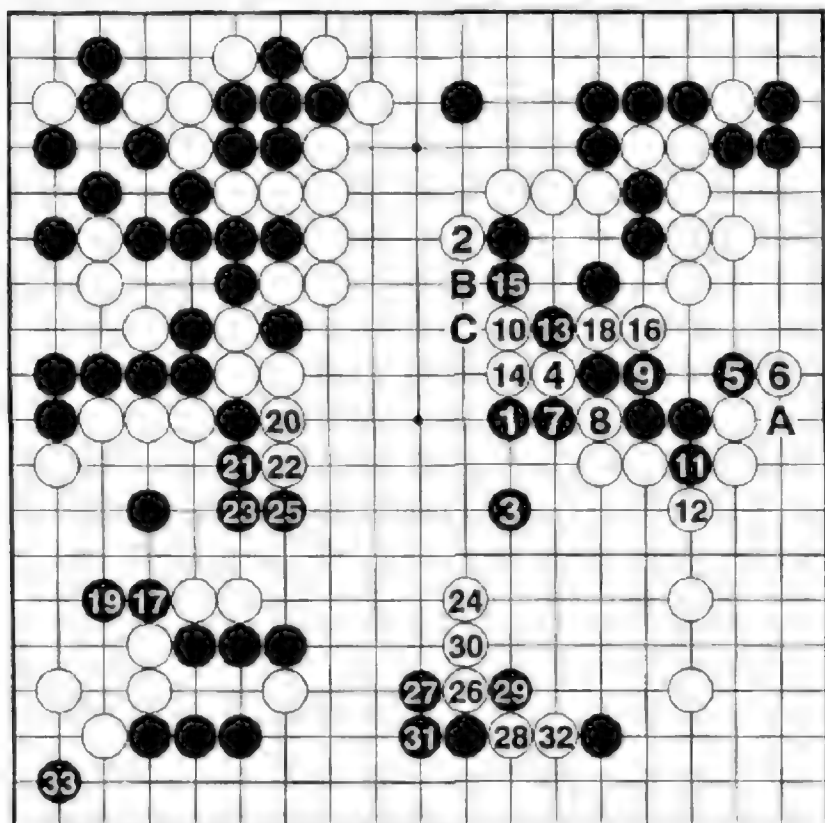
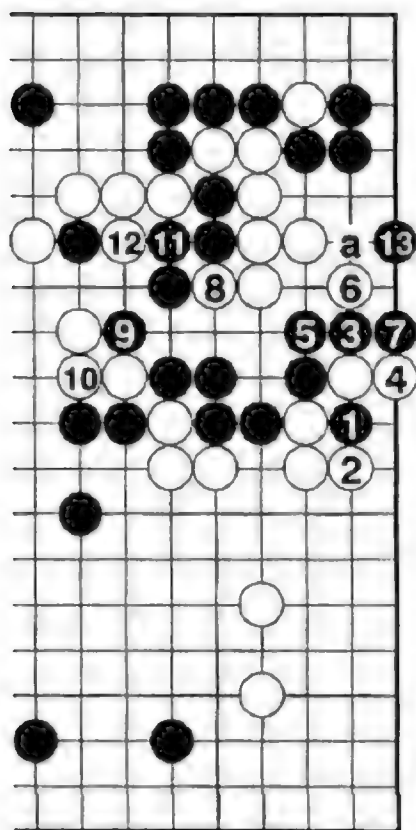
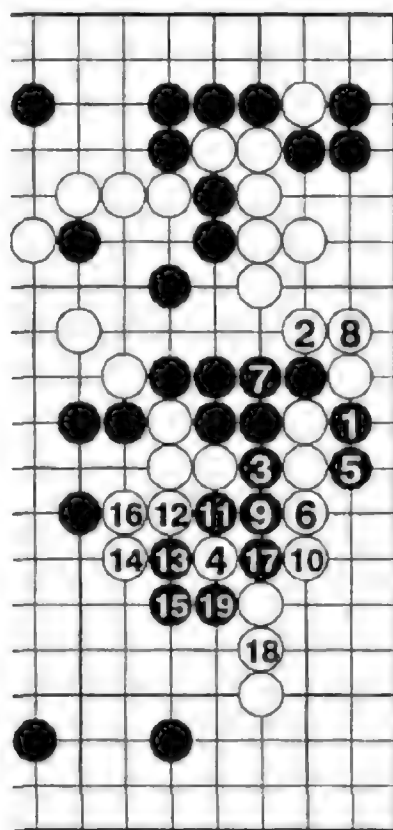


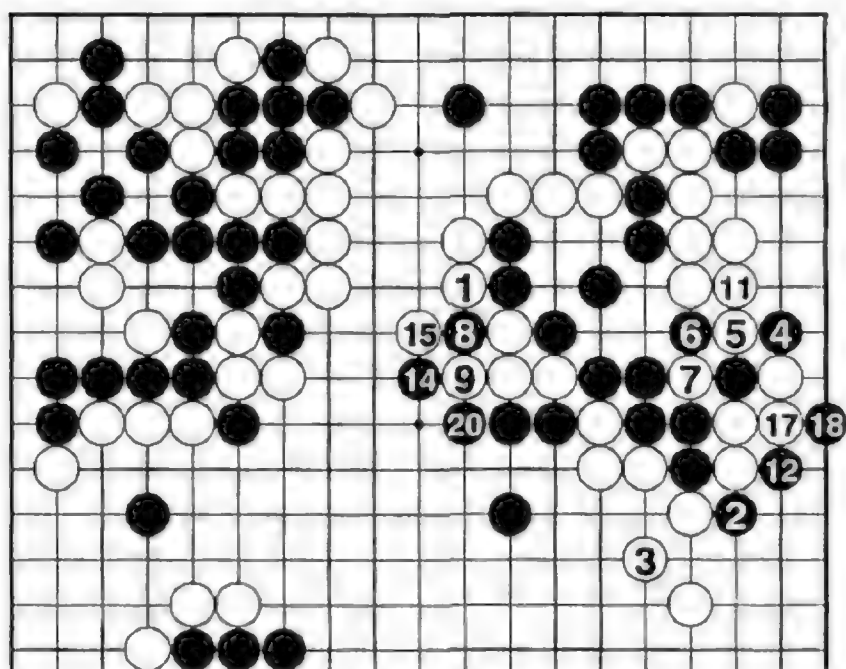
Figure 5 (101-133)



Dia. 13: Black wins



Dia. 14: good for Black



Dia. 15: a false assumption
ko: 10, 13, 16, 19

Figure 5 (101-133). Yamashita's mistake, Hane's losing move

Black 1. Black has skilfully settled his group. White's shape is thin.

White 4 is a do-or-die move. If White doesn't attack this group, there's nowhere left to fight. White 10 is the most tenacious move.

Black 11. Both Kataoka and Kojima exclaimed with surprise when they saw this move on the TV monitor in the pressroom. 'Eh? Doesn't Black lose the fight by a move?' They had already concluded that Black A won the fight.

Dia. 13. If White 2, Black plays 3 and 5. White can't omit 12 — if instead he plays at 'a', Black plays 12 and wins with one eye to no eye. Black 13 is a tesuji: Black wins the capturing race. Instead of 2 —

Dia. 14. If White resists with the atari of 2, White 4 is essential in answer to Black 3. The sacrifice move of 5 is a tesuji; White can't stop Black from extricating his group up to 19. Needless to say, this result is good for Black.

Yamashita's reading must have focussed on a different point. His *tetsuki* (the way one holds the stone) appeared full of confidence when he played 15.

Hane's 16 came as a shock to him, however. His ears went red, he slapped himself on the cheek, he tore his hair. [When Yamashita first started playing in title matches, people marveled at his perfect manners and imperturbable demeanour — obviously the pressure of top-level play is beginning to tell a little.]

The only explanation is that Yamashita had assumed that blocking at B was White's only move.

Dia. 15. If White 1, Black counters with the two-step hane of 4, forcing White to fight a ko. Black has three ko threats, which is enough: White collapses after 20.

White 16 forestalls the ko in the diagram. If Black answers by connecting at 18, White blocks at B, and Black is helpless.

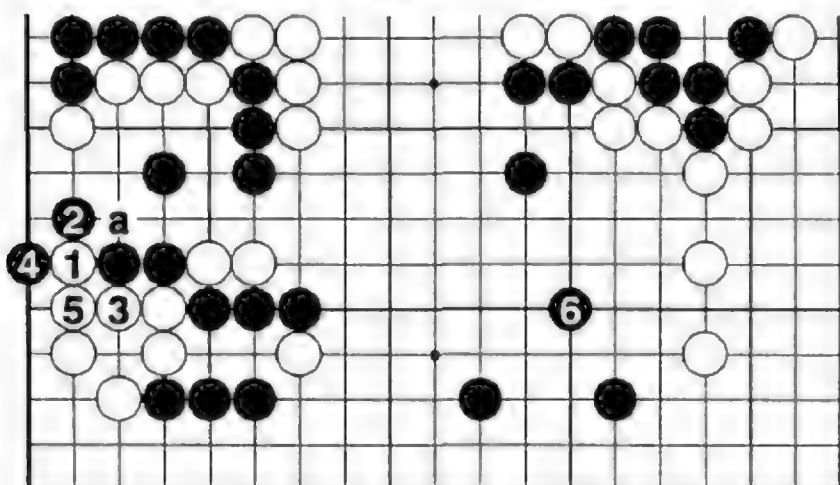
Yamashita may have received a shock, but he recovered quickly. Black calmly cuts at 17, which sets up a ladder for Black C. White 18 is the only move: White captures with good aji.

In turn, Black cuts off the four white corner stones with 19. Kataoka: 'This obviously wasn't his original strategy, but the result turned out OK.'

White 24 may be the losing move, according to Kataoka. The most urgent move is attaching at

1 in *Dia. 16*.

Dia. 16. After White lives with 1 to 5, he is left with the cutting point of 'a'. Black expands the bottom area with 6, and the game will be decided by how much territory he gets in the centre. Kataoka: 'The position is even.'

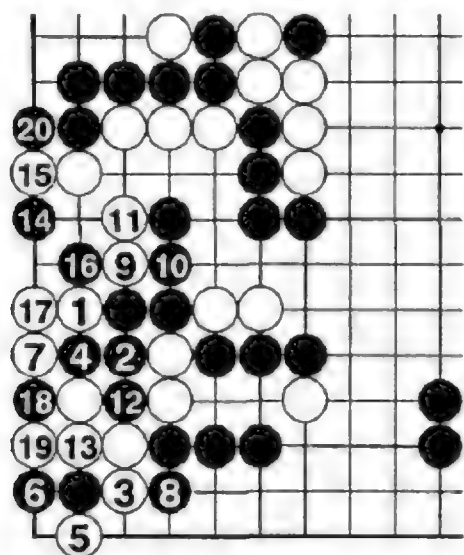


Dia. 16: White's missed opportunity

Black 25 is a thick move. White 26 and 28 aim not only at destroying black territory but also at expanding White's bottom right corner.

Hane started byo-yomi while thinking about 32.

Black 33 kills the corner group at one blow. According to Kataoka, this is worth more than 40 points. Attaching at 1 in *Dia. 17* is now too late. The moves to 8 are essential; 9 and 11 are also the only moves. At this point, Black 12 is a calm move, and the following moves are all well timed. White ends up unable to atari.



Dia. 17: Hane's oversight

Hane: 'I overlooked the fact that the group could be captured unconditionally . . . just when I thought I'd got into the game.'

The final mistake is always the most costly one.

Figure 6 (134–177). Back to even

The game ended at 5:43 p.m. When he resigned, Hane was about 20 points behind on the board.

Somehow, Yamashita had clawed his way

back to even and he readily admitted that luck had played a part.

Incidentally, this was Yamashita's 500th win as a professional. He set a new speed record, reaching this mark in just ten years 11 months. Even if he had known, this would have meant little to him. The real meaning of the game was that it kept alive his chances of defending his title.

White resigns after Black 177.

(Adapted from the *Yomiuri Newspaper*)

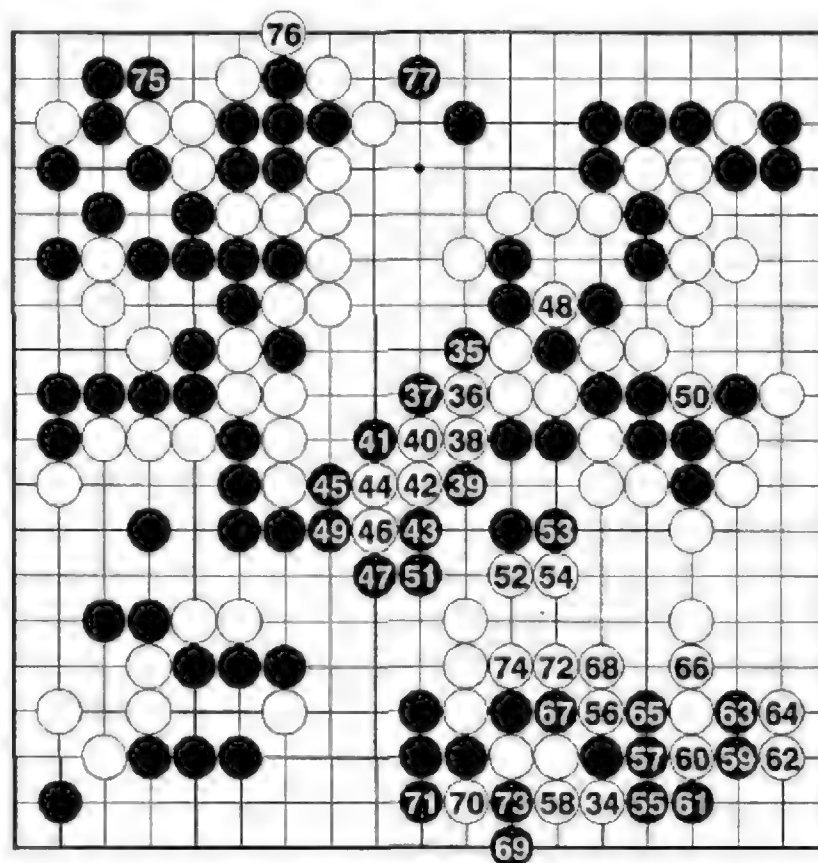


Figure 6 (134–177) 50: connects

Having won three games in a row, Yamashita seemed to have all the momentum. In fact, there was no precedent of a player winning a best-of-seven after winning the first three games, then losing the next three.

History, therefore, seemed to be on Yamashita's side. The first time a player recovered from a 0–3 deficit, it was termed a 'miraculous upset', but it has happened five times in all, so obviously it's not quite the miracle it seems.

The relevant title matches are listed below, the first-named player being the one who made the fightback. Cho Chikun has been involved in four of the five, though once on the wrong side of the upset. Would the weight of historical precedent prove too much for Hane?

'Miraculous upsets'

1. 1973, 12th Meijin: Rin vs. Ishida
2. 1983, 7th Kisei: Cho vs. Shuko
3. 1983, 38th Honinbo: Rin vs. Cho
4. 1984, 9th Meijin: Cho vs. Otake
5. 1992, 47th Honinbo: Cho vs. Kobayashi Koichi

Game Seven

A climactic life-and-death struggle

White: Yamashita Keigo

Black: Hane Naoki

Played in the town of Toi, Shizuoka Prefecture on 17 & 18 March 2004.

Commentary by Cho Sonjin 9-dan. Report by Sano Makoto.

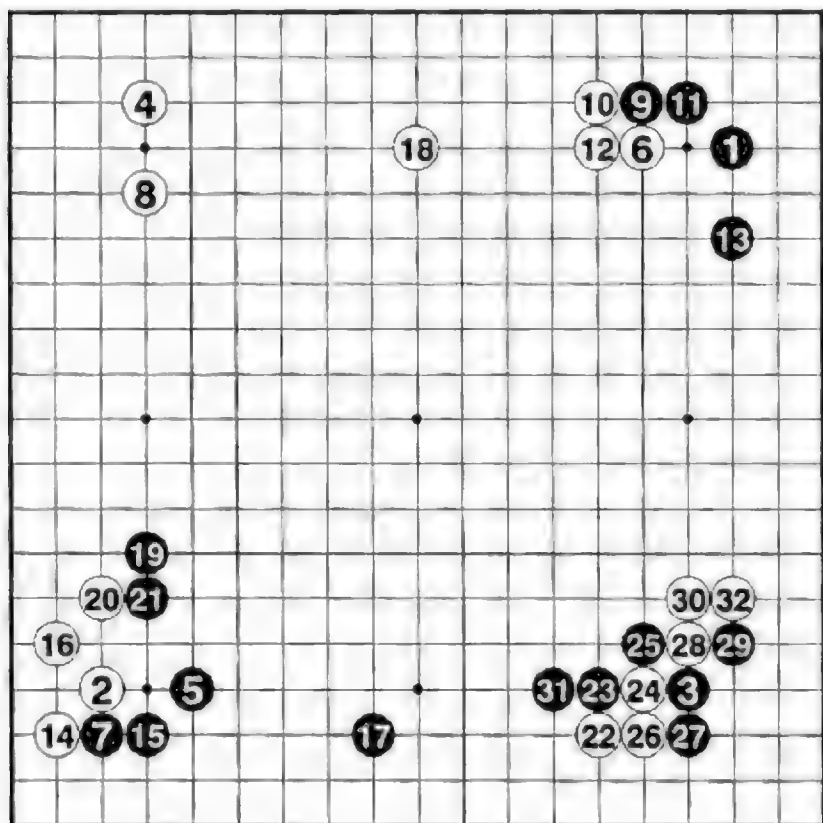


Figure 1 (1-32)

Figure 1 (1-32). Early complications

As it was the seventh game, the players conducted the *nigiri* again and Hane drew black.

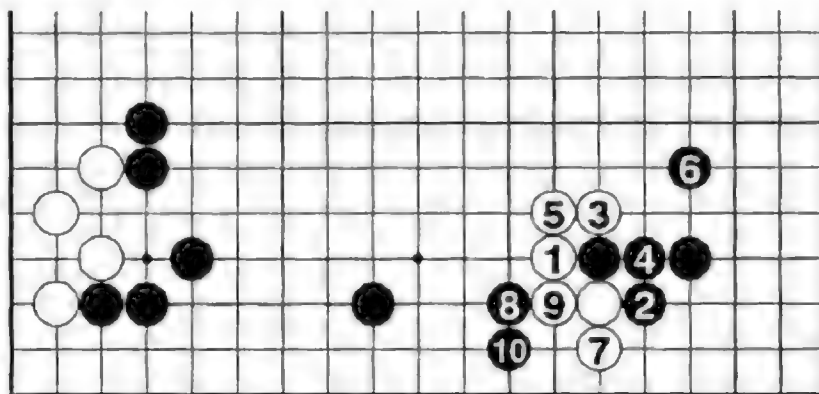
Black 9 and 11 are quite unusual. That may seem a strange thing to say about such a common joseki, but playing it here lets White make ideal shape at the top with 18. It seems that Hane decided on a thoroughgoing territorial strategy for this game.

Before playing 18, however, White switches to 14 and 16. It's not clear if these moves are a plus or a minus, as Black gets the superb pressing move of 19. White has to play 20 to forestall Black 20, but the result is that 19 becomes a sword point that limits the effectiveness of the distant white moyo at the top.

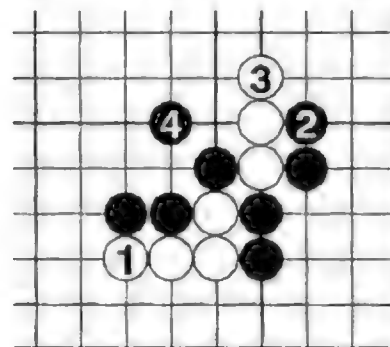
Black is satisfied with this result, but the game looks even when White makes the approach move of 22.

Black 23. Hane commented that he was hoping for White 1 in *Dia. 1*. White gets a forcing move at 3, but then his next move is difficult. If he connects on top with 5, Black secures the corner with 6; if then White 7, Black attacks with 8

and 10. If instead of 5 White connects at 9, Black cuts at 5.



Dia. 1: what Black wants

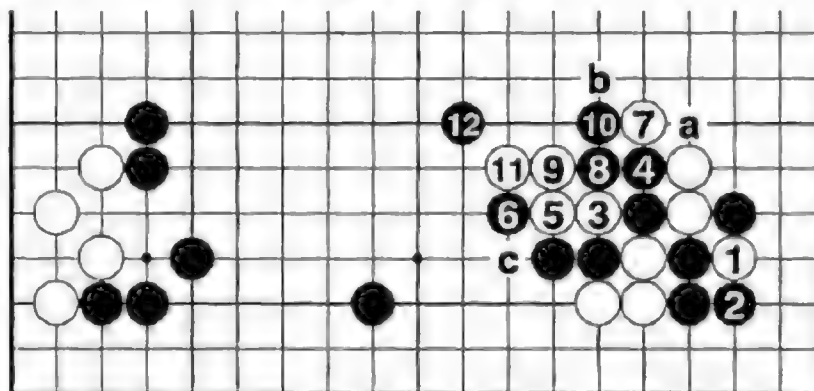


Dia. 2: a tough fight for White

The hanekomi of 24 leads to a very difficult joseki. White 32 is a crucial point. If White plays 1 in *Dia. 2*, he can save the bottom group, but Black 4 makes miai of attacking the two white groups, both of which are heavy.

Yamashita took 72 minutes over 32. Among the variations he must have looked at, there is an interesting one involving a ladder.

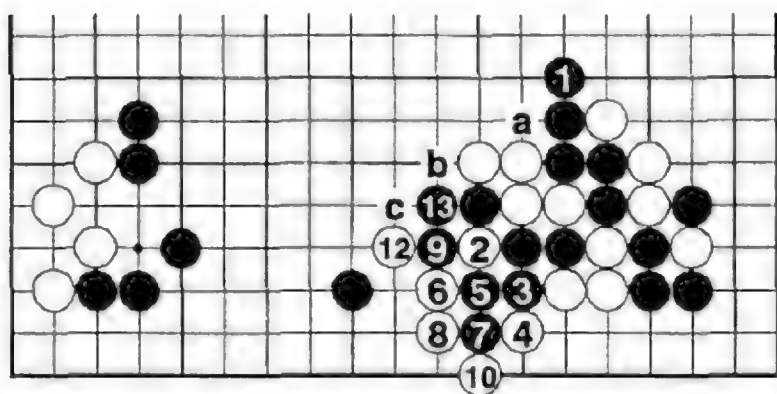
Dia. 3. White cuts at 1 so that after 5 Black can't get a ladder at 'a'. After the moves to 11, Black seems to be in trouble, as White is threatening to set up two different ladders. The first one is with 'b', the second after White 'c' (see *Dia. 4*). However, Black 12 is a tesuji that spoils both ladders. [This remarkable tesuji was actually played in Game Two of the 20th Kisei title match — see GW76, page 23.]



Dia. 3: double ladder breaker

Dia. 4. If Black plays 12 in the previous diagram at 1 here, White gets a spiral ladder after 13. Playing 1 at 'a' makes no difference, as White can set up the ladder with either 'b' or 'c'.

White 32 gives up the three stones at the bottom.



Dia. 4: spiral ladder

11: connects

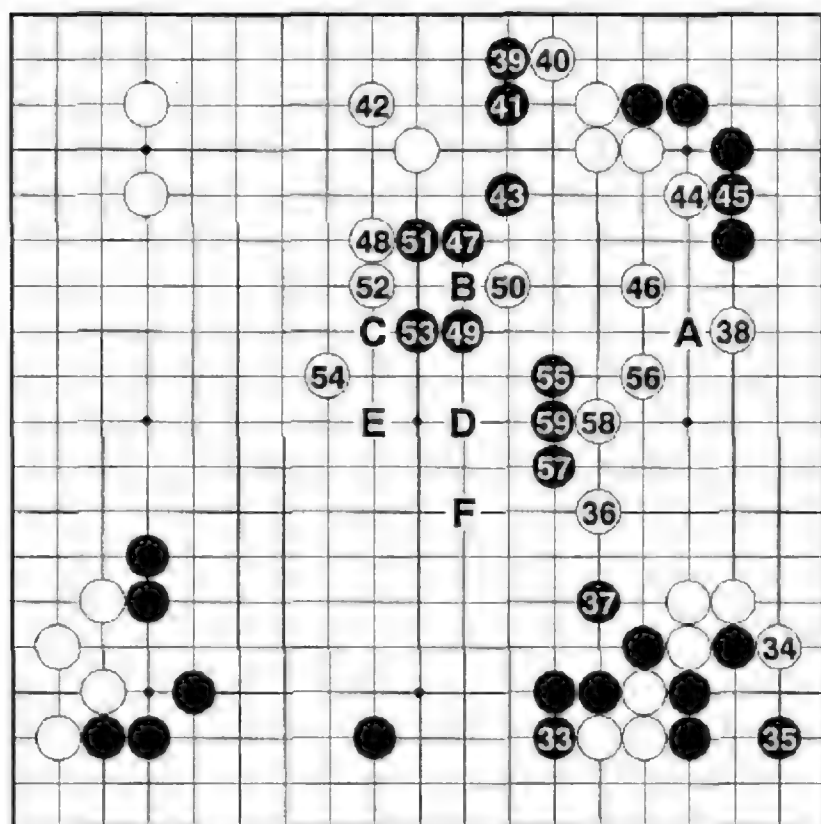
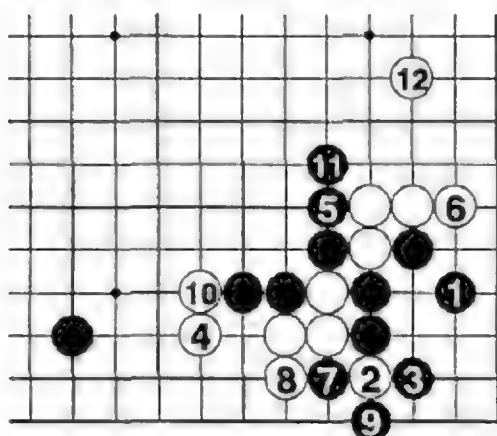


Figure 2 (33-59)



Dia. 5: a different game

Figure 2 (33-59). A hostile reception for the sealed move

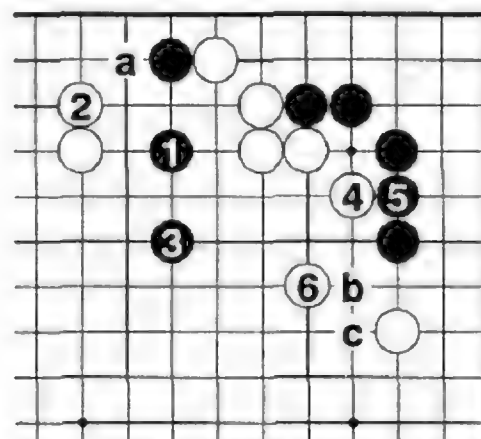
Black 33. The strongest move is 1 in Dia. 5. One possible continuation is the sequence to 12 shown here. Evaluating this result is difficult. Hane preferred to take a firm grip on the bottom area, letting White develop along the right side.

Black 39 is a surprising invasion. The players following the game in the pressroom — the chief figures were Cho Sonjin, Takemiya Masaki 9-dan and O Meien 9-dan — had expected something like Black A.

White 40 is the only move: attaching on top at 41, letting Black link up, would be slack.

Black 41 is another move that surprised the players in the pressroom, who had expected

Black 1 in Dia. 6. Cho surmised that Hane disliked the prospect of White 2. After the same moves as in the game with 4 and 6, White would be left with the option of linking up with 'a', so Black wouldn't be able to take aim at White's thinness at 'b' or 'c'.



Dia. 6: good for White

White 42. If White attaches below 41, Black will jump out to 42 and lay waste to all the top area.

Black 51. The sealed move. It was badly received in the pressroom, as was the continuation of 55 to 59. 'This lets White play first in the top left — Black can't hope to win.'

Cho: 'First, to take the sealed move, our forecast was the connection of Black B. We expected that after White C-Black D-White 59 Black would switch to reducing the top left area. The problem with the sealed move is that, whereas Black moves towards the bottom in tandem with White with Black B and White C, in the game White is advancing one step ahead with 54.'

White 54 is really an ideal point: it expands the top left white moyo and also reduces the bottom black moyo. Surely permitting Black to take such a superb point is questionable.

Ironically, Black's relaxed, leisurely strategy with 51 to 59 seems to have upset White's rhythm.

By the time Cho Sonjin gave his commentary for the Yomiuri, he had revised his opinion from his immediate reaction on the day. 'One can't necessarily claim that Black 51 to 59 was dubious,' he said. 'If Black had followed our forecast, it's a fact that choosing the right point for reducing the top left white moyo is very vexatious. White E is also sente, forcing Black F. Hane's strategy was to take his time, building extra strength in the centre, and to put the onus on his opponent to find the right move in the top left. Anyone can see that the top left is the focal point of the position, which is why we queried Hane's strategy on the day, but now that I con-

sider the matter more calmly it seems to me that Hane's play showed admirable patience.'

One should also not overlook the fact that in effect Black has blocked off the right, as he can play the 83-85 combination seen later.



Hane goes his own way with the sealed move.

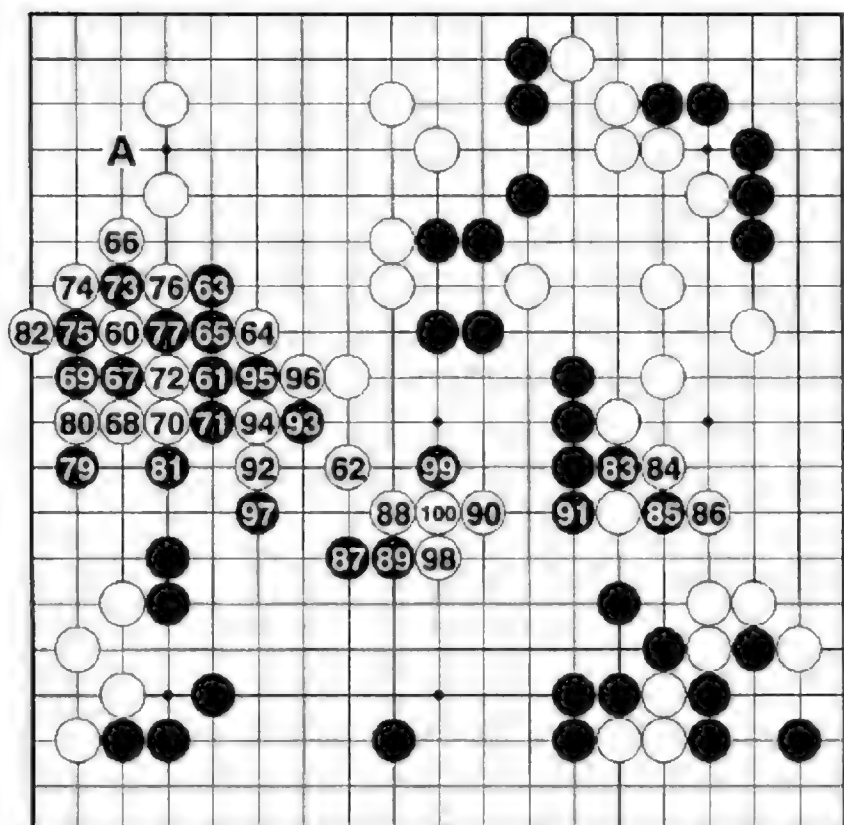
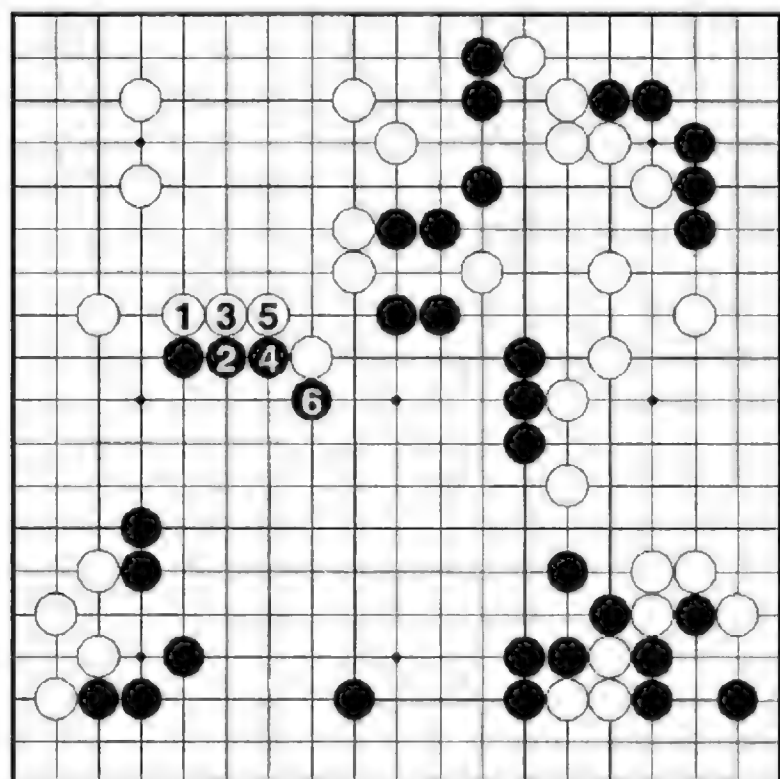


Figure 3 (60-100) 78: connects



Dia. 7: a loss for White

Figure 3 (60-100). Yamashita falters.

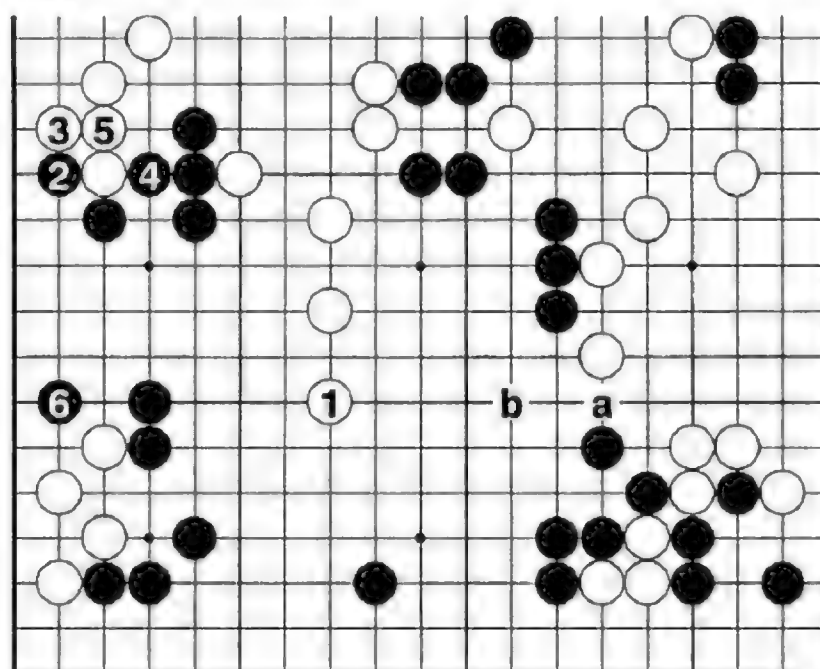
White 60 may be an error in judgement, though, if so, a very subtle one. Cho: 'In the pressroom, the suggestion was made that 60 should have been played on the 5th line, at 61. This emphasizes the centre rather than the left side; by building thickness here, White nips in the bud the potential of Black's bottom moyo. The only thing is that White will have trouble dealing with Black A, so I don't know if White 61 is the best move or not. White 60 shows a concern with territory; White 61 would have been more in keeping with Yamashita's style, but it's only human to play cautiously in the final game. I don't think this move can be criticized.'

Still, it can't be denied that White 60 invited the good move of 61. The latter puts the question to White: do we each enclose our own moyos or do we go for mutual reduction?

White 62. Following Dia. 7 leaves White 'definitely behind' (Cho), so White has to go for mutual reduction with 62.

White 68 is clearly a blunder. The players in the pressroom immediately laid out the sequence to 87, which seems to be inevitable. The result is that White gains a little over ten points in territory while Black squeezes effectively and walls off his bottom area. The comparison is too much in Black's favour.

Cho: 'In this figure, Yamashita seems worried about territory. Instead of 68, jumping down to 87 is the only move. As before, the lead would be unclear; the game would move into a difficult endgame.'



Dia. 8: correct for 68

Hane agreed with Cho. He commented later that he had expected White 1 in Dia. 8, which he planned to answer with 2 to 6. Just for the record, Otake Hideo advocated exchanging White

'a' for Black 'b' before jumping to 1.

Hane believed he was ahead when he played 87. However, the main drama is still to come.

Black 93 is a sacrifice to set up 97. If Black simply connects, White can extend at 97.

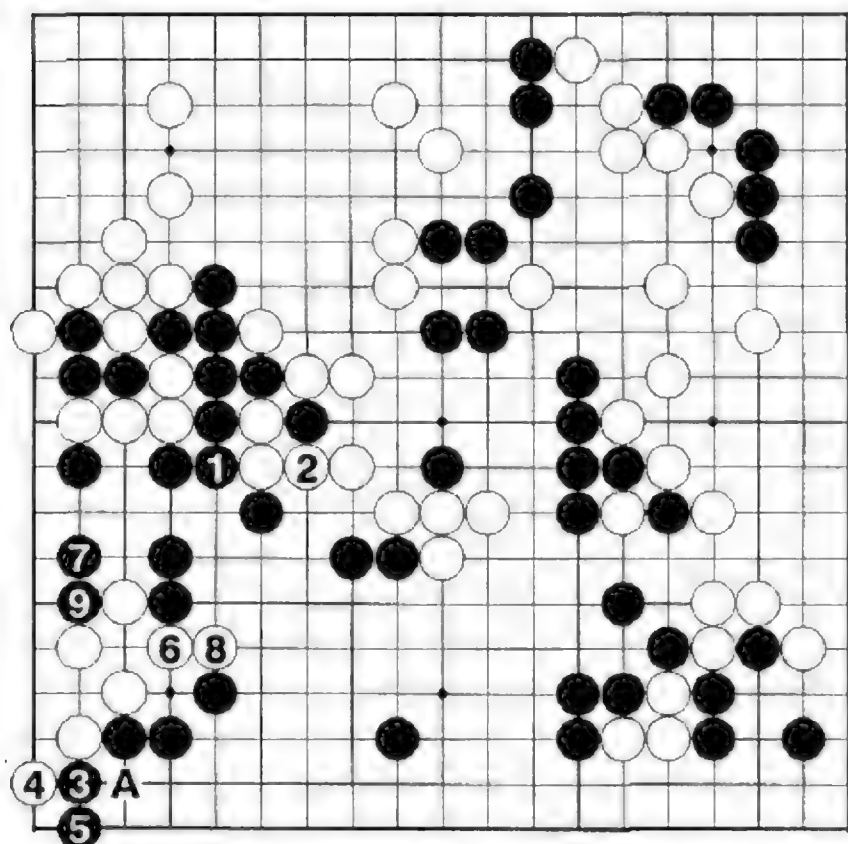
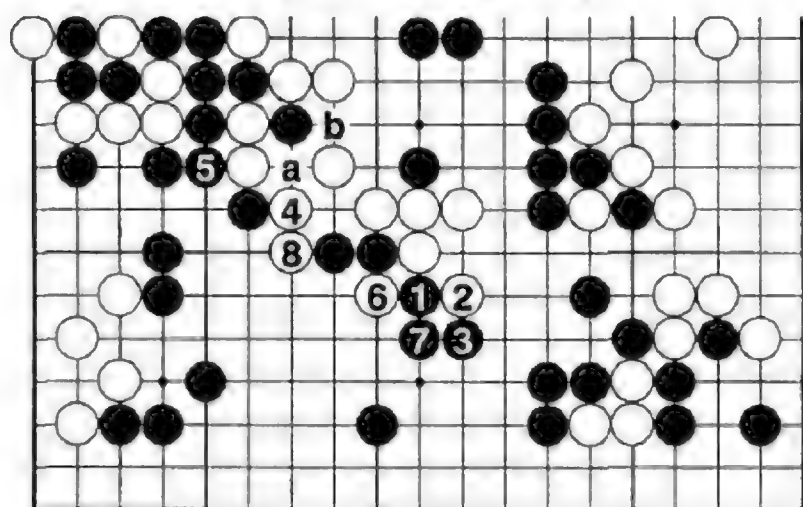


Figure 4 (101-109)



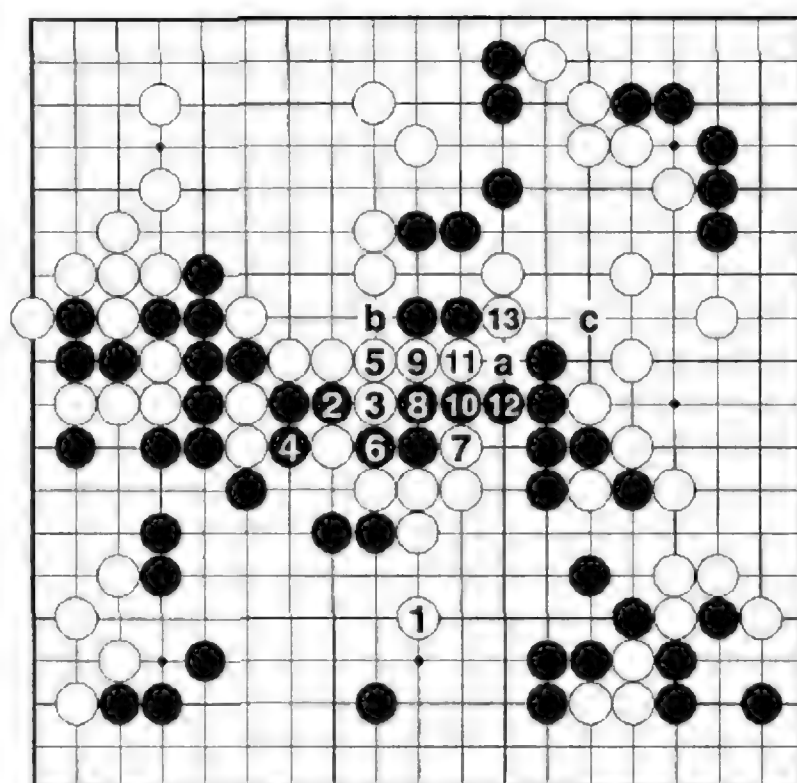
Dia. 9: unreasonable

Figure 4 (101-109). The final fight

Black 1. Hane commented that playing immediately at 1 in *Dia. 9* would have been a mistake. Black has to make the two-step hane of 3 to win, but White will ignore Black 5 and push down with 8. Capturing with Black 'a' doesn't hurt White, who just answers at 'b'.

That doesn't mean that White can ignore Black 1 in the figure, though, in favour of jumping down to 1 in *Dia. 10*. Black can cut White off with 2 to 12. It may look like a trade with 13, but Black 'a' makes miai of 'b' and 'c', so this is not an even exchange. White 7 at 10 is refuted by Black 7.

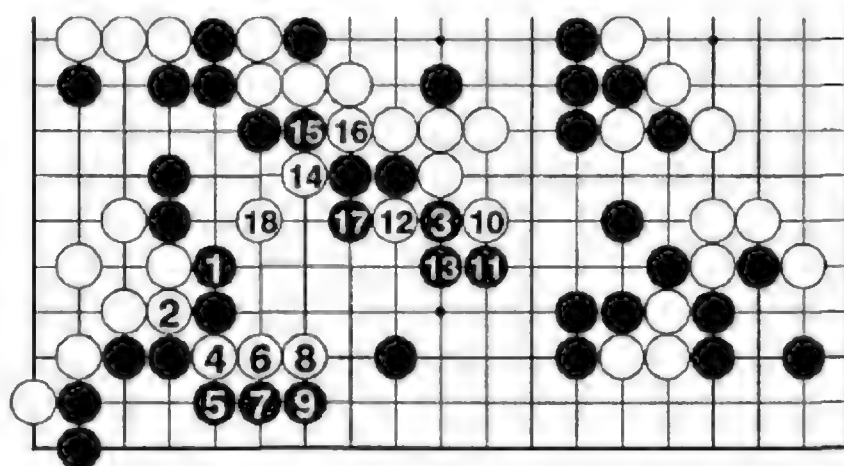
After White 2, someone in the pressroom commented that Black was ten points ahead on the board, the first time a numerical value had been offered.



Dia. 10: bad for White

Speaking of numbers, Hane's desire to save a third of a point leads to a dramatic climax. Black 5 is worth one third of a point more than A, but it creates very bad aji in Black's position. After the game, Hane defended himself, saying: 'If this one third of a point had influenced the result and I had lost by half a point, I would never have got over my regret. That's why I went all out.' [Unfortunately, the endgame calculation was not explained.]

If Black had played at A, White would have secured life with White 7, and the game would have ended peacefully — in a loss for White. Instead, he tries to exploit Black's bad aji by playing at 6. Black can't block: his only choice is to try to kill White with 7.



Dia. 11: disaster

Dia. 11. If Black plays 1, White lives with 2. When Black hanes at 3, White plays 4 to 8 in sente, then 10 etc. in the centre. White 18 is decisive, as it makes miai of capturing two stones above and below. That means that Black has to play 11 at 13, but White 11 causes him a loss equivalent to komi, so his lead disappears. If Black had played at A in the figure, this se-

quence wouldn't work, as Black could atari at 6 instead of 5.

The issue has been simplified: if White secures life for his group, he wins; if Black kills it, he wins.

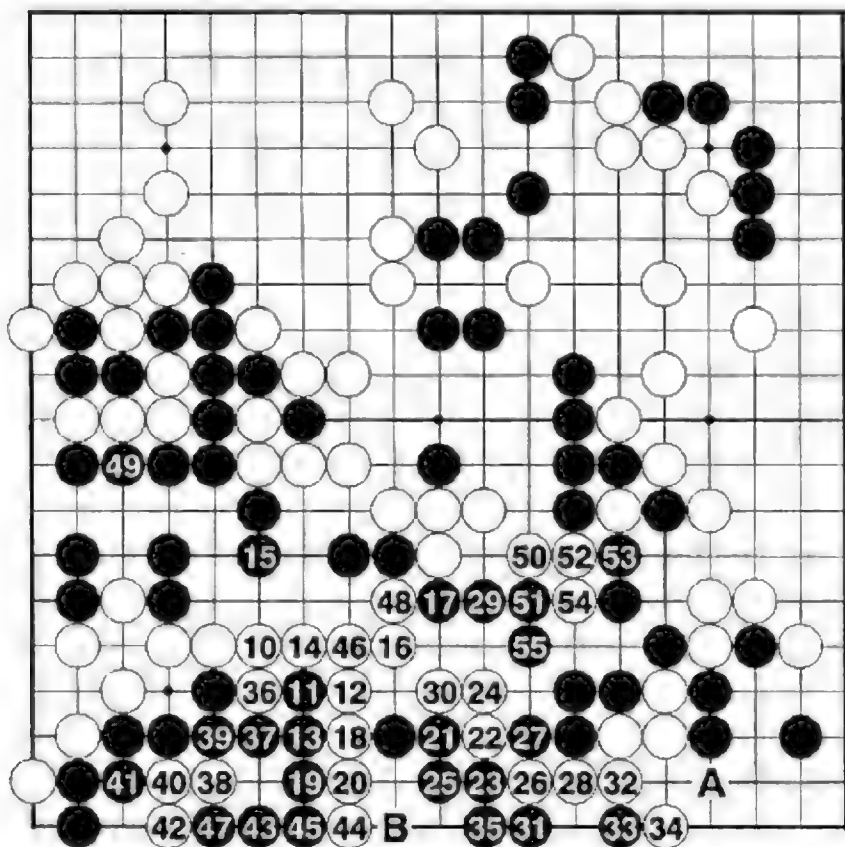
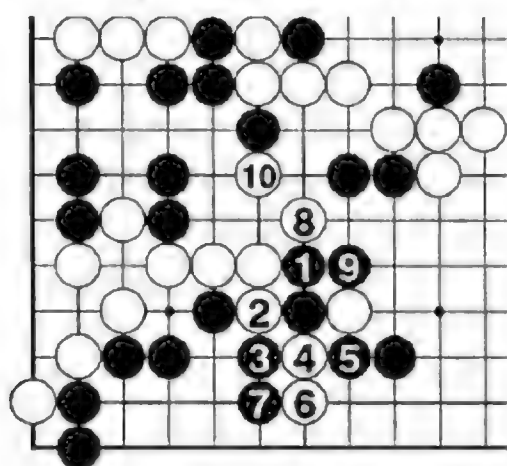


Figure 5 (110-155)



Dia. 12: good for White

Figure 5 (110-155).

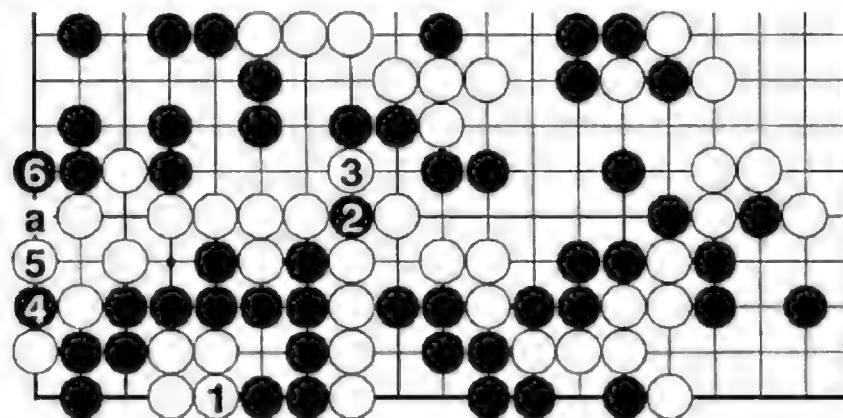
White 10. White 11 looks like another possibility, but it is successfully countered by Black 36-White 10-Black 14. Yamashita believed he had a better chance with the 10-12 combination. If at 1 in *Dia. 12*, cutting with 2 and 4 gives White forcing moves in the centre. Black probably can't kill him after 10.

Black answers White's attack calmly with 13. Black 15 is a key move. When he played 19, there was a look of relief and confidence on Hane's face. It seems he had completely read out the fight. Black's corner group is alive after 19, so he can occupy the vital point of 21.

Black 35 is an important move. If instead Black descends at A, White B is sente against the corner, so White throws in at 35 and gets an approach-move ko. When Black plays 35, White B is irrelevant to the capturing race to the right.

(White B is important, because when White makes the placement at 38 Black needs to occupy the point of 45.)

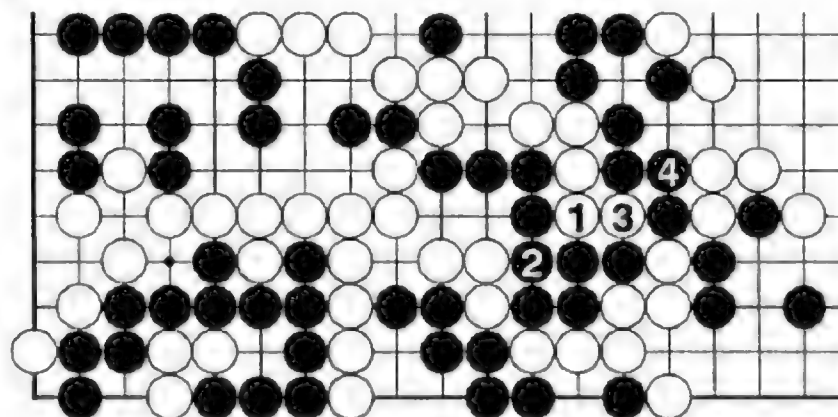
Black 47 secures a seki. If White had played 46 at 47, this would have given a *gomoku-nakade* (five-point large eye). In that case, Black would have had to be careful.



Dia. 13: Black wins

Dia. 13. Black has to make throw-ins at 2 and 4. This puts him one move ahead in the capturing race. If he played 4 at 'a', he would, on the contrary, lose by one move when White connected at 4.

White resigns after Black 55. Pushing in at 1 in *Dia. 14* leads nowhere, as Black just connects at 2 and 4.



Dia. 14: unavailing

This was a fitting climax to a series that had threatened to fizzle out but had then built up a lot of drama. Hane's skill in handling the final fight, particularly in completely reading out the variations, shows that he is a worthy Kisei. Actually, he is the first Kisei from outside the Tokyo headquarters of the Nihon Ki-in, and the first Nagoya player to win a big-three title.

White resigns after Black 155.

(Translated from the *Yomiuri Newspaper*, with reference to a commentary by Hane in *Igo*. Kisei report translated by John Power.)

Big three prize money

Kisei: 42,000,000 yen (about \$407,000)

Meijin: 36,000,000 yen

Honinbo: 32,000,000 yen

The 42nd Judan Title Match, Game Four

Former Kisei O Rissei is the only middle-aged player still hanging on at the top. Aged 46 (as of 7 November 2004), he is the oldest player to hold one of the top seven titles. Moreover, defending the Judan set a personal record for him: it was the first time he had won a title four times in a row. His previous best was winning the Kisei and the Oza three years in a row.

In retrospect, this title match is notable as Cho U's only setback on the Japanese scene during 2004. Moreover, he lost two games in which he held black, something that didn't happen in his next three title matches.

Recently, *Go World* has had trouble finding space for the lesser Japanese titles, but we are including this game for its entertainment value. O Rissei played an adventurous opening, more in the style of O Meien than in his usual territorial manner, and scored a dramatic victory.

White: Cho U Honinbo

Black: O Rissei Judan

Played in Dogo Hot Spring, Ehime Prefecture on 15 April 2004.

Commentary by Sato Masaharu 9-dan.

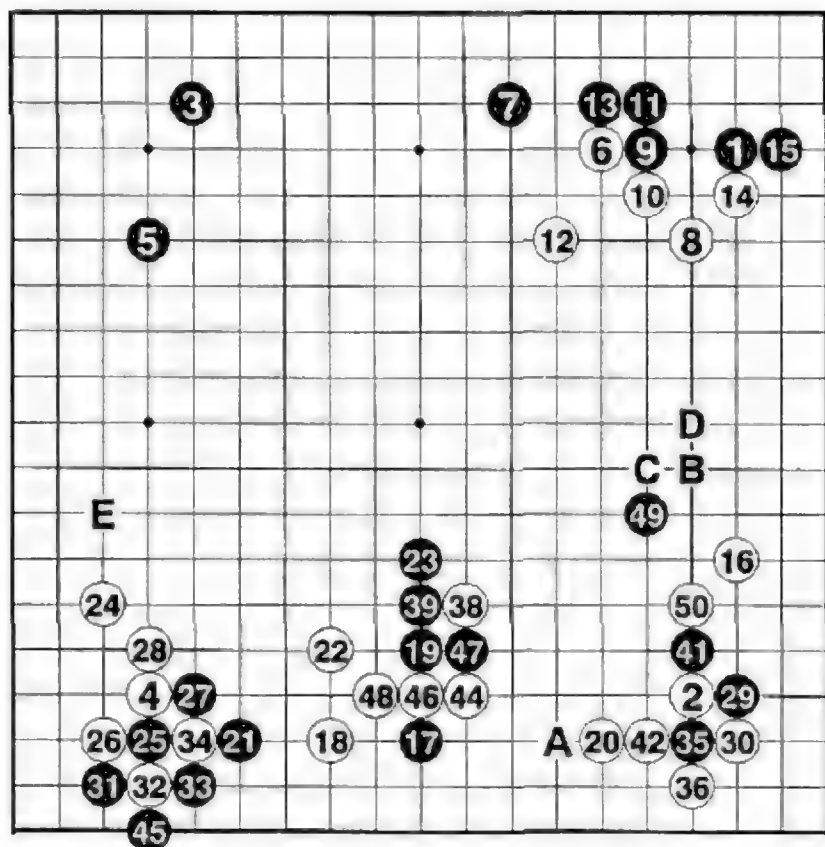
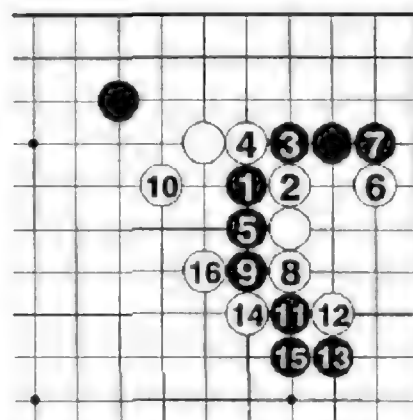


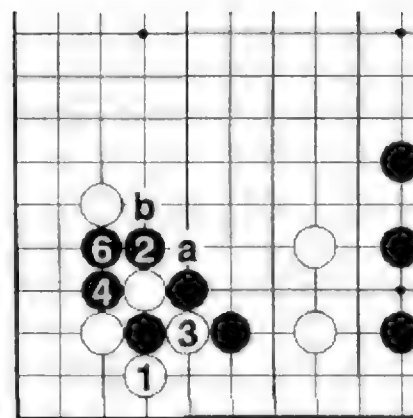
Figure 1 (1-50)
ko: 37, 40, 43

Figure 1 (1-50). Black's good start

A high move like 5 is very unusual for O Rissei. Cho plays an unusual move for any player with 8. If Black cuts through the middle with 1 in *Dia. 1*, the result to 10 is good for White. Black 11 and 13 don't work.



Dia. 1: good for White



Dia. 2: good for Black
5: connects

Black counters calmly with 9 etc. in the game.

Black 19 is another unusual move. Black A is the standard follow-up to a splitting move like 17, but White 42 will be too good; after Black 19, White plays 22 and is doing well on both sides. Black has something severer in mind: the invasion of 21.

White 28. If at 1 in *Dia. 2*, a trade is likely. If White 'a' and Black 'b' follow after 6, White becomes a little overconcentrated while Black is developing in a good direction.

Black attaches at 29 to create ko threats.

The result of the ko to 48 seems a fair exchange, but Black plays a superb move next. Black 49 kills three birds with one stone: it reinforces the black stones to the left; it holds in check the white moyo; and, best of all, it has the severe follow-up seen in the game.

White 50. If White answers at B, Black exchanges C for D (note that the white territory is open at the side below 15), then harasses the bottom left white group with E. This would be too good for Black.



O Rissei

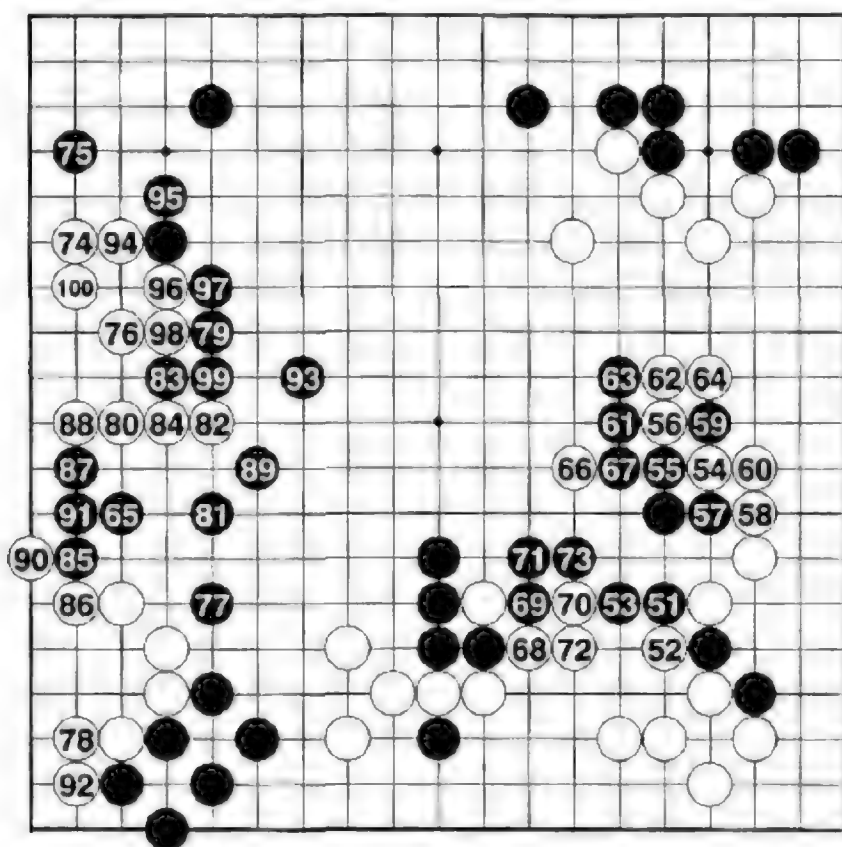


Figure 2 (51-100)

Figure 2 (51-100). Double attack

White takes profit with 52, but Black has become thick. In the end, Black keeps sente and switches to 65. White can't afford to answer this move docilely. He switches to the top with 74, but a double attack is inevitable.

In order to live up to 100, White is forced to help Black to wall off the outside.

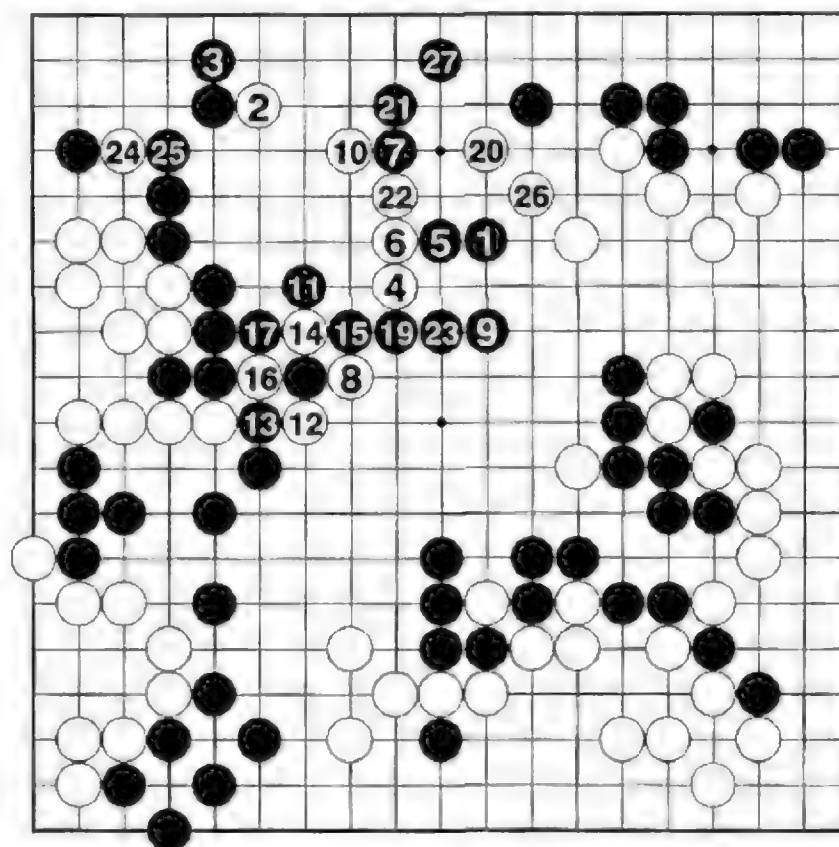


Figure 3 (101-127)

18: connects

Figure 3 (101-127). A convincing win

Black 1 sets the seal on victory. Rather than being a do-or-die move, White 4 just sets the scene for resignation.

White can't pull out his stones after 27, so there's no point playing any further.

White resigns after Black 127.

(Monthly Go World, June 2004)

The 59th Honinbo Title Match: Cho U vs. Yoda Norimoto

The 59th Honinbo title match featured an ideal pairing: Meijin vs. Honinbo. In recent years, Yoda Norimoto Meijin had impressed go fans as being perhaps the strongest Japanese player, but, unlike predecessors such as Cho Chikun and Kobayashi Koichi, he had never seemed greedy for all the titles. In particular, he had failed to shine in the Honinbo tournament and had appeared in only two leagues before the 59th league, something almost inconceivable for a player of his stature. If he were to take the Honinbo title from Cho U, he would have three titles (he also held the Gosei) and his claim to the number one place would be indisputable.

Winning the Honinbo title would be no easy task, however. In the last year or so, Cho U has become the dominant player on the Japanese go scene. Even though he hadn't actually won many titles yet — just four before this match — he had already established himself as perhaps the best all-round player.

Commentators agree that Cho reads both more deeply and more widely than his rivals; he has probably the best positional judgement; and, on top of that, he is the top contemporary composer of life-and-death problems.

The clash between these two players was eagerly awaited. Our commentary on the first game takes the form of a round-table discussion hosted by Komatsu Hideki 9-dan.

Game One: The art of fighting kos

White: Cho U Honinbo

Black: Yoda Norimoto Meijin

Komi: 6½; time: 8 hours each.

Played in Sapporo City on 7 & 8 May 2004.

Figure 1 (1-23). Ignoring the peep

Komatsu: This is a typical Yoda start.

Otake Hideo, Honorary Gosei: A star point and a small-knight enclosure.

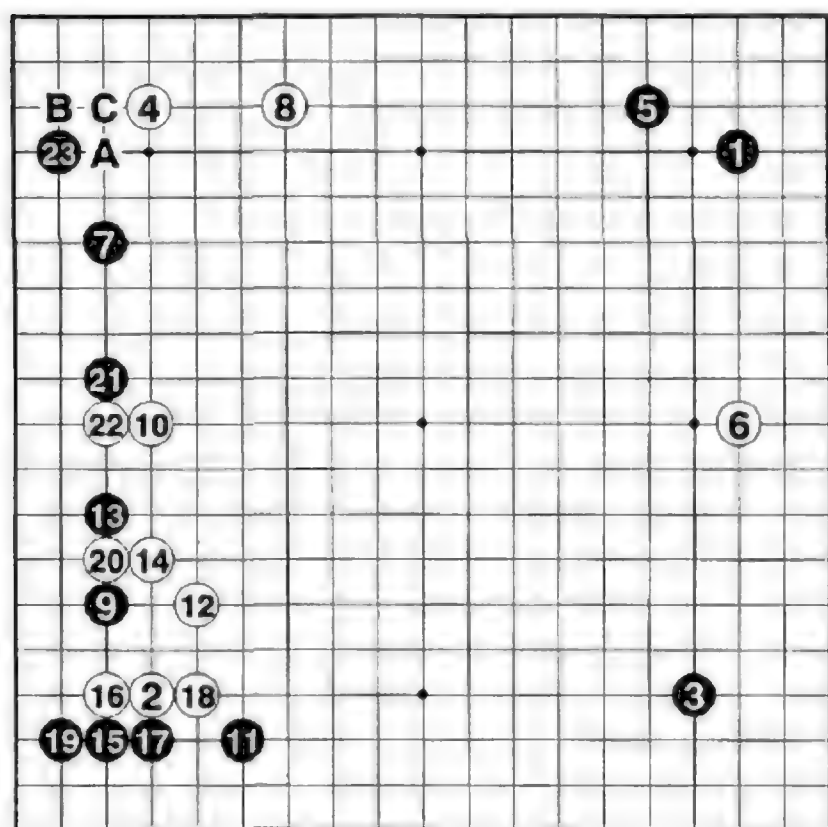
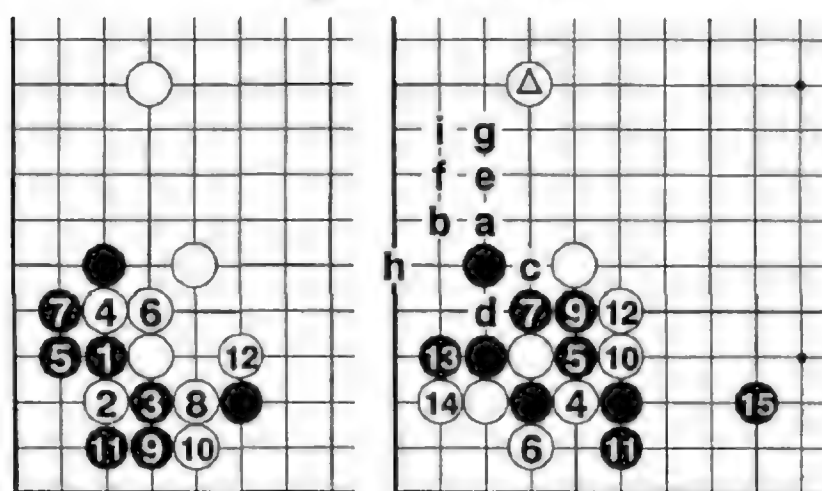


Figure 1 (1-23)



Dia. 1: good for both?

Dia. 2: a mistake
8: connects

Komatsu: He plays this opening at least once in every title match. In the old days, White 8 was almost always played at A.

Takao Shinji 8-dan: Cho's theory seems to be that A loses points.

Otake: Really? That's interesting. White 12 is a move that was around in the old days, but it's been especially popular recently. This is where the fun begins.

Komatsu: Black 13 is unusual. The fashionable moves are 1 and 3 in *Dia. 1*.

Takao: Cho considers the sequence to 12 satisfactory. I used to play him a lot on the Net, and this variation often came up — because I consider it good for Black and Cho good for White.

Komatsu: Instead of 4, making an atari at 4 in *Dia. 2* is bad: the white corner group is captured. Because of the distance of the marked stone, Black can answer White 'a' with 'b' to 'h'. If the marked stone were one line lower, White could counter Black 'f' with White 'i'.

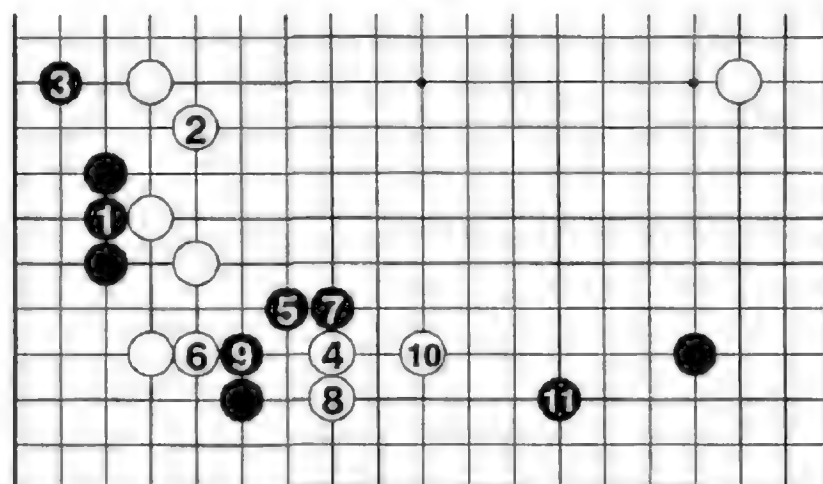
Reporter: Black doesn't connect in answer to

the peep of White 14. How about this?

Takao: I didn't think connecting was good.

Otake: I agree! If neither Takao nor I would connect, then no one would.

Komatsu: Hold on. Let's look at the connection. There are games in which Black has played 20 and White then played 15. I wonder if White 2 in *Dia. 3* is out of the question.



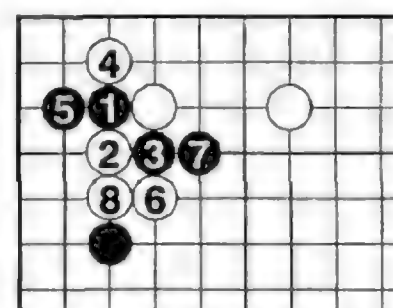
Dia. 3: not appealing for White

Takao: If Black 3, White plays 4? If Black now invades at the 3-3 point, Black gets a reasonable result.

Komatsu: Black will probably play 5. I wouldn't feel like following this diagram. The ineffable shape of White's bottom left group — handling this properly would need real artistry.

Reporter: So the sequence to 20 is about what one can expect here? . . . Black's shape feels painful to me. His stones are in tatters when White pushes down at 20. Black 21 feels like a makeshift move.

Otake: There's no reason why this would be good for Black. But probably Yoda is well aware of all this. His attitude is: OK, let's play this game without fighting. Maybe he's evaluating the strength of the Honinbo. This is the kind of give-and-take seen only in a best-of-seven.



Dia. 4: bad for Black

Takao: Taking up position with 23 was an impressive move. Though you could say it's only natural.

Komatsu: Black 1 in *Dia. 4* would be bad. White's left side is too big when he counters with 2 to 6.

Takao: If Black played 23 at B, White might

just ignore it, which would be upsetting. Black doesn't have a good follow-up move.

Otake: Whereas Black C after 23 would make really good shape. It would be flexible.

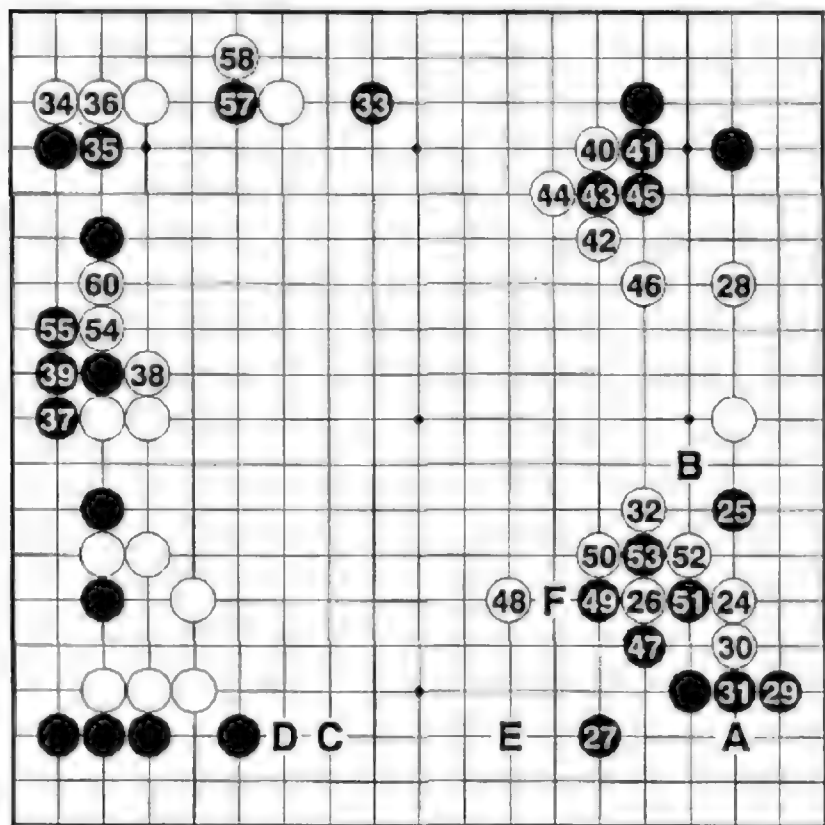


Figure 2 (24-60)
ko: 56, 59

Figure 2 (24-60). Leeway to experiment

Takao: Fierce fighting starts with 24. The moves to 27 seem reasonable. White 28 looks like a move the player agonized over.

Otake: I agree.

Takao: The standard strategy here would be to slide to White 29, followed by Black A and White B. White looks like getting territory at the bottom, so I can't see how he could be dissatisfied with this.

Reporter: White territory at the bottom? I'm ashamed to admit it, but I haven't the faintest idea what's going on.

Komatsu: The key is the White 29-Black A exchange. In the future, when White plays C-Black D-White E, it's hard for Black to ignore the last move. If White E is sente, White gets an excellent territory here.

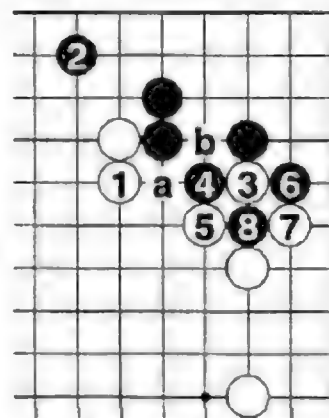
Reporter: Perhaps because of the influence of the result in the bottom left corner, Cho, who's usually said to be a territorial player, is playing a centre-oriented game. Wouldn't you feel uneasy adopting an unfamiliar strategy in a title match?

Otake: I have a set answer to that kind of question. In a best-of-seven, you can lose three times. To put it another way, your right to lose three games is recognized. So you feel the urge to try experiments you usually can't. Conversely, you can't play in a best-of-seven without this kind of psychological leeway.

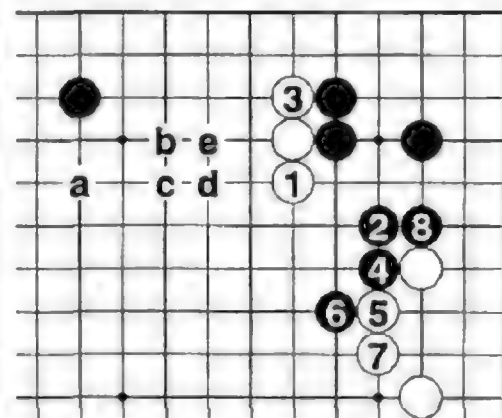
Komatsu: Black 41 is the only move in answer to the shoulder hit. At first, though, I couldn't accept White 42.

Takao: You're referring to White 1 in *Dia. 5*?

Komatsu: Yes. The standard shape is Black 2, so White attaches at 3 and challenges Black to a ko up to 7. White has ko threats at 54 in the figure, so the fight looks feasible.



Dia. 5: ko



Dia. 6: a difficult fight

Otake: It would be unbearable for Black if he were forced to answer White 'a' at 'b'. I agree, this looks good for White.

Komatsu: But if Black resists with 2 in *Dia. 6*, it will be a difficult fight. Black gets a very strong shape in the top right up to 8.

Takao: If next White 'a', Black 'b'.

Komatsu: A fight looks likely with White 'c'-Black 'd'-White 'e'. On the face of it, White seems to have good momentum, but if I were asked if White could win this way, I couldn't answer yes instantaneously.

Otake: White is left with defects when Black hanes in at 43, but perhaps his reasoning is that with the one move of 42 he has maintained the line that Black breaks through in *Dia. 6*. There's a plus and a minus.

Takao: Even so, Black certainly plays calmly with 41 on.

Otake: That's right. I was reminded of Kitani Sensei. How to put it? The way he advances one step at a time is the spitting image of Kitani.

Komatsu: White goes all out with 46, as he considers himself thick in the centre. This move feels good.

Takao, Komatsu: Black 47 is absolutely a good move.

Reporter: White 48 was the sealed move. I had no idea what either side was aiming at.

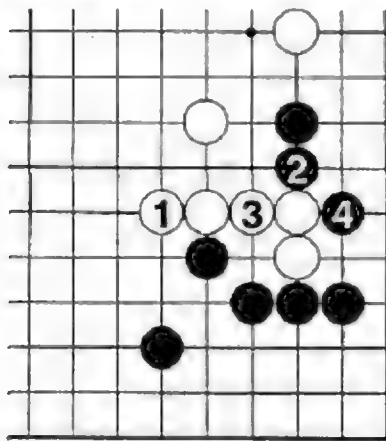
Komatsu: If White plays 48 at 1 in *Dia. 7*, Black plans to play 2 and 4. If he links up on the side, this is a success for Black. White will also be dissatisfied with the location of 1.

Otake: So most people would consider playing 48 at F. Cho goes one step further.

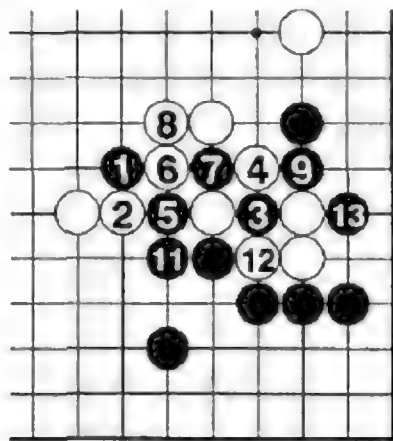
Takao: I thought he'd made a mistake in recording the sealed move.

Otake: He likes ko. Just like Rissei and you, Takao. A pack of nuisances, eh, readers?

Komatsu: The ko fight continues for a while. Black plays some resolute ko threats.



Dia. 7: Black satisfied

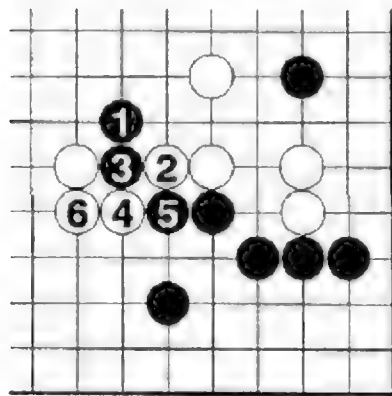


*Dia. 8: Black satisfied
10: ko (below 7)*

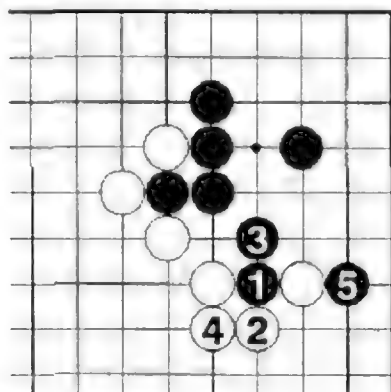
Takao: Wait a minute. How about Black 49 at 1 in *Dia. 8*? I used my head a little.

Otake: Black's satisfied if he links up with 13? I see.

Takao: So, instead of 2, White might follow *Dia. 9*. This sequence is also conceivable.



Dia. 9: variation



Dia. 10: endgame profit

Figure 3 (61–80). Ko subtleties

Komatsu: Black 69 is an incredible ko threat. Not one you really want to make, though.

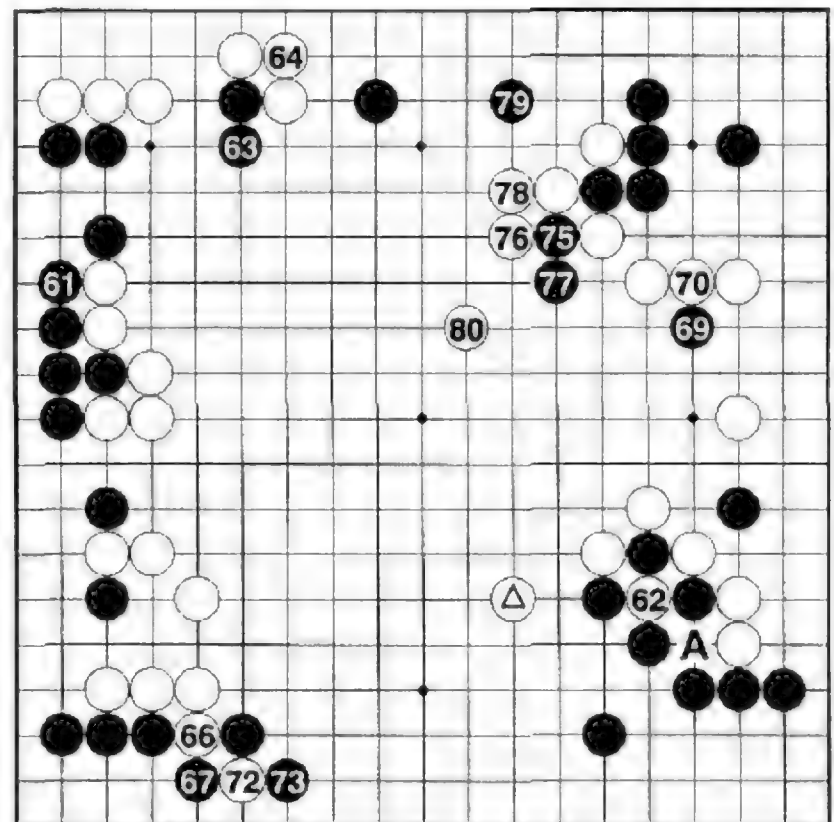
Takao: I could never play it. Compared to *Dia. 10*, it loses about ten points.

Komatsu: This is just a guess, but perhaps Yoda wanted to make White use the ko threat of 72. He believes that this way Black has the lead. After all, anyone can understand the logic of *Dia. 10*.

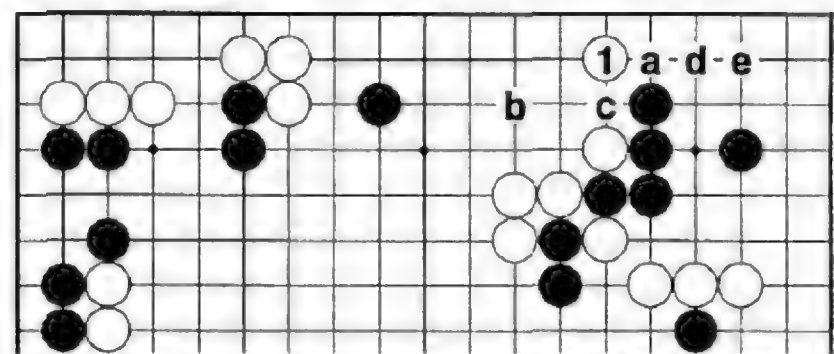
Reporter: The ko fight continues for a while longer, but it's not clear to me what the focus is. Even if Black wins the ko and connects at 62, he doesn't land a destructive blow on White. Likewise, even if White wins the ko and captures at A, it doesn't seem to be anything to write home about.

Komatsu: Right, right. It's hard to call this shape a real ko fight. For that very reason, the

marked white stone is a marvellous move.



*Figure 3 (61–80)
ko: 65, 68, 71, 74*



Dia. 11: dangerous for Black

Reporter: Why doesn't Black use 79 to take the ko? It seems to me he loses a ko threat.

Otake: The fact is that White causes trouble by using 1 in *Dia. 11* as a ko threat. Answering with Black 'a' would be very submissive.

Takao: The value of Black 'b' has been diminished. If there were already a stone in place at 'b', Black would answer White 1 not at 'a' but at 'c'.

Otake: But, on the other hand, if Black ignores 1 and finishes off the ko, something more frightening will happen. What was it, Komatsu?

Komatsu: After White 'a' and Black 'd', White attaches at 'e', creating quite bad aji. No, worse, it's definite trouble. Black will be hard put to secure eye shape.

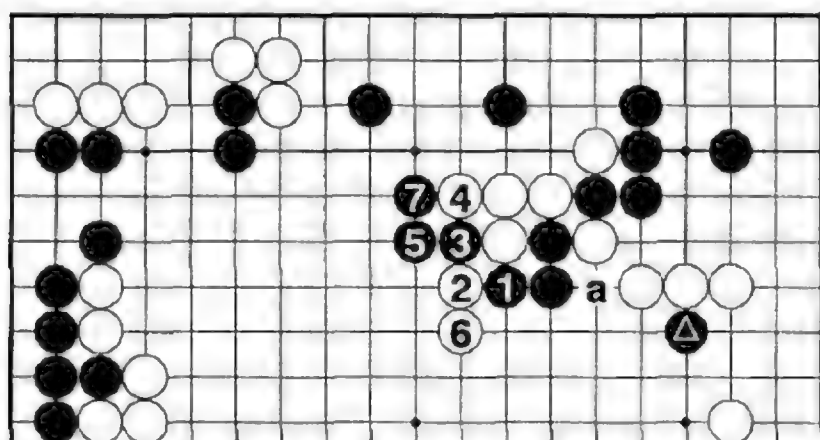
Otake: In view of your question, you're probably also wondering about using 80 to finish off the ko with White A.

Reporter: Just as you say.

Komatsu: If White 80 at A, Black cuts with 1 and 3 in *Dia. 12* (next page); if White 6, Black just turns at 7 – he wins the capturing race. The marked stone, which we were just saying lost ten

points, proves to be really effective. Without it, White captures Black with 'a'.

Takao: Does that mean that Yoda foresaw all this?



Dia. 12: a success for Black

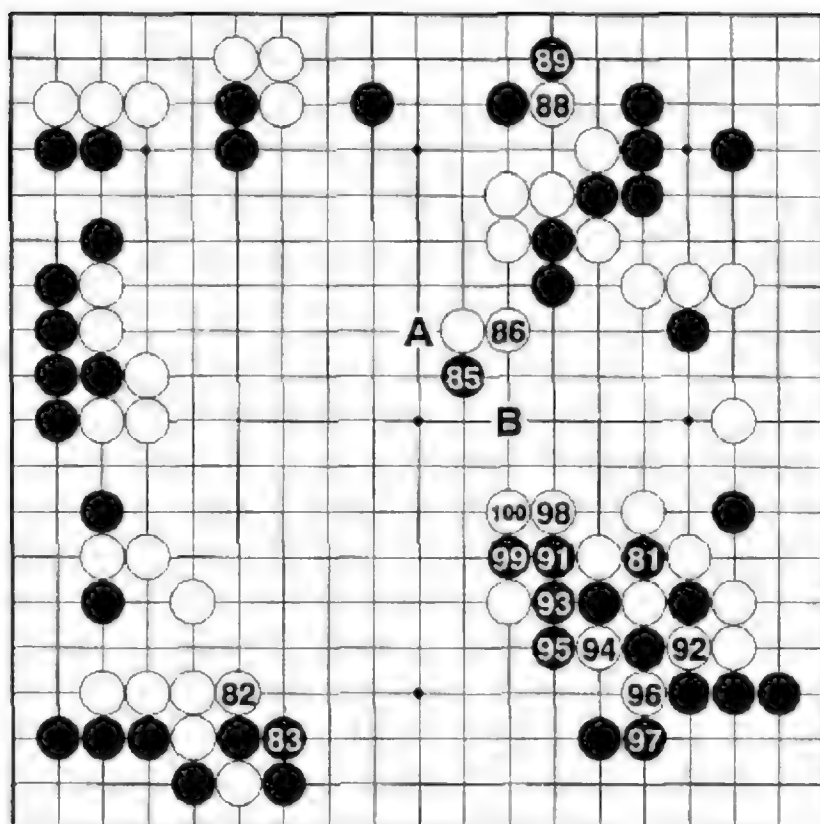
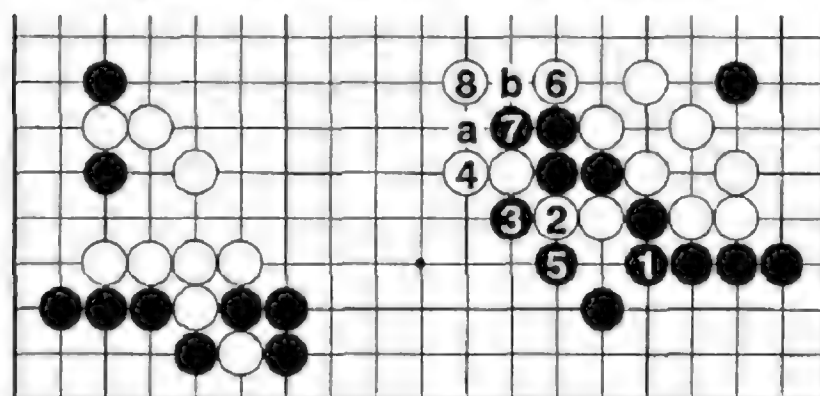


Figure 4 (81-100) ko: 84, 87, 90



Dia. 13: White is satisfied

Figure 4 (81-100). The ko fight finally ends.

Komatsu: Black 85 is a move you'd want to play even if it weren't a ko threat. Black's rhythm is good at this stage.

Otake: If White ends the ko with 86, does Black play 86-White A-Black B?

Komatsu: Various moves look possible for B, but I would end the ko.

Takao: Cho apparently thought that the sequence in the game was good for him.

Komatsu: The ko finally ends with 92. If

White plays 92 at 93, the sequence reverts to *Dia. 8*, so White has no choice about 92.

Otake: If Black uses 95 to connect?

Komatsu: Black 1 in *Dia. 13*? White might play 2 to 8. If he has the centre blocked off, White has no grounds for complaint. Black will push through at either 'a' or 'b', then capture the two stones.

Otake: White's defects worry me.

Komatsu: It's quite feasible for Black.

Takao: Connecting didn't occur to me.

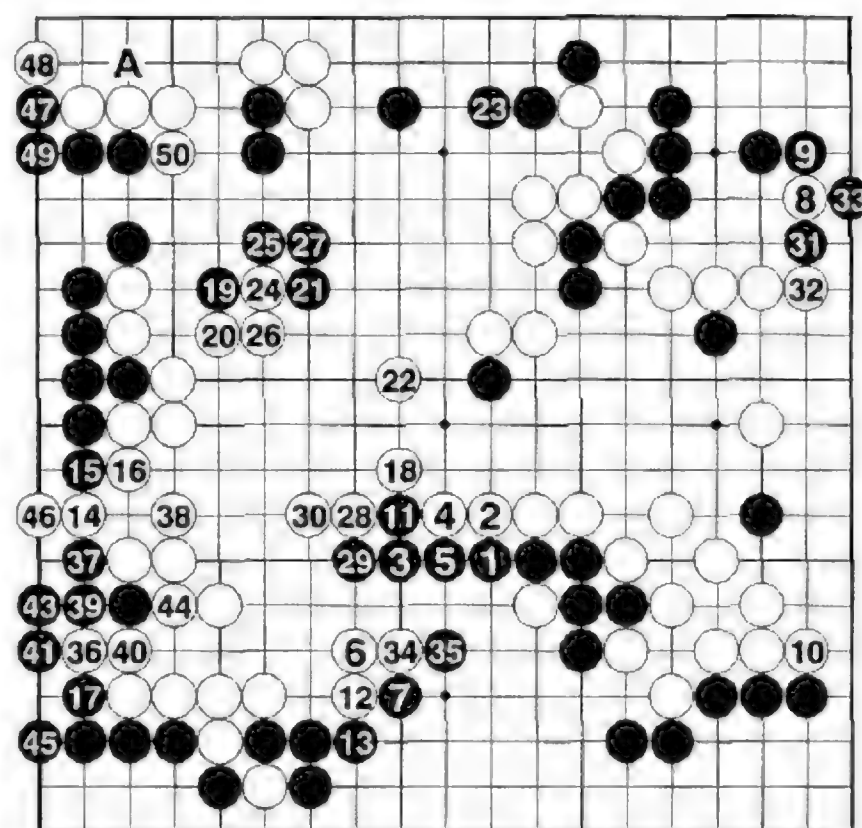
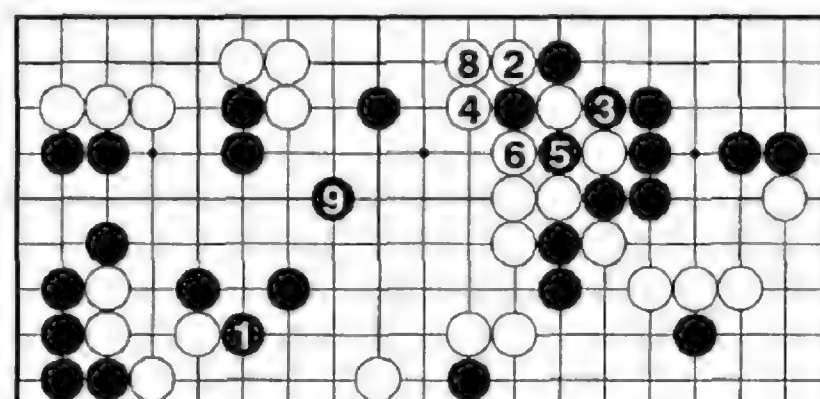
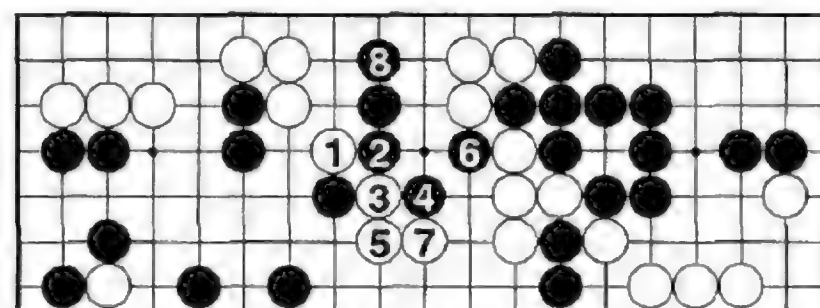


Figure 5 (101-150) 90: ko



*Dia. 14: not to Yoda's liking
7: connects*



Dia. 15: Black wins

Figure 5 (101-150). Unjustified optimism

Otake: I did the public commentary at the Nihon Ki-in in Tokyo. When Yoda played 3, I said that perhaps he thought the game was all over. This is manifested in Black 11. I think this move is dubious. Black clearly loses points when

White captures a stone with 14.

Takao: Does Black 23 also show signs of optimism?

Otake: How about 1 in *Dia. 14*? Yoda apparently disliked the prospect of White 2 to 8, but there are no problems after Black 9. If White attacks with 1 in *Dia. 15*, Black wins the capturing race after 8. If instead White plays 1 in *Dia. 16*, Black plays 2 and 4, then presses at 6.

Takao: Black 1 in *Dia. 14* is good. This way Black looks likely to win by a little.

Otake: When White switches to 30, the game is good for him. At the commentary venue, we were following the game in real time. After 30, if I recall correctly, Yoda didn't play for a long time. This is purely speculation, but probably Yoda counted, made a precise calculation for the first time. He wanted to confirm his gut feeling that he was winning, but found something odd. He may have been quite startled.

Komatsu: All one can say is that it would have been fantastic if Black 23 had secured a win.

Reporter: That doesn't seem unreasonable when the bottom area has expanded so much.

Otake: Although close, the actual position is slightly favourable for White. But the lead changes two or three times after this.

Komatsu: I think White 38 is an unusual slip for Cho. Descending at 1 in *Dia. 17* is correct.

Otake: That's right. The descent is usual.

Komatsu: If after 5 Black 'a'—White 'b'—Black 'c' is played, as in the game, White gets sente.

Takao: In the diagram, White has dispensed with the move at 38 in the figure. There's a difference regarding whether or not White is left with the option of capturing five black stones, but *Dia. 17* is best for White.

Reporter: Is the game even when Black gets to play 47 and 49?

Otake: It hasn't gone that far yet. Hey, try counting it. The simplest variation, with 50 at A.

Takao: I've already counted it about a hundred times. White wins by 1½ points.

Komatsu: The bottom territory is, let me see, 53 points, so . . .

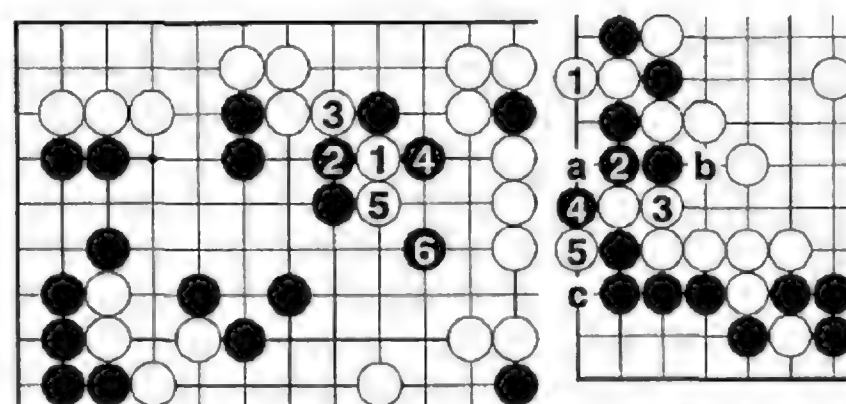
Takao: Right, right.

Komatsu: Black has 95 points, White 90. White wins by 1½ points. There's no mistake.

Otake: I thought White couldn't lose if he answered 49 at A.

Reporter: Does that mean that, in contrast to Yoda, Cho was pessimistic?

Komatsu: No, it's natural to want to play 50 and 52 [next figure].



Dia. 16: good enough

Dia. 17: correct

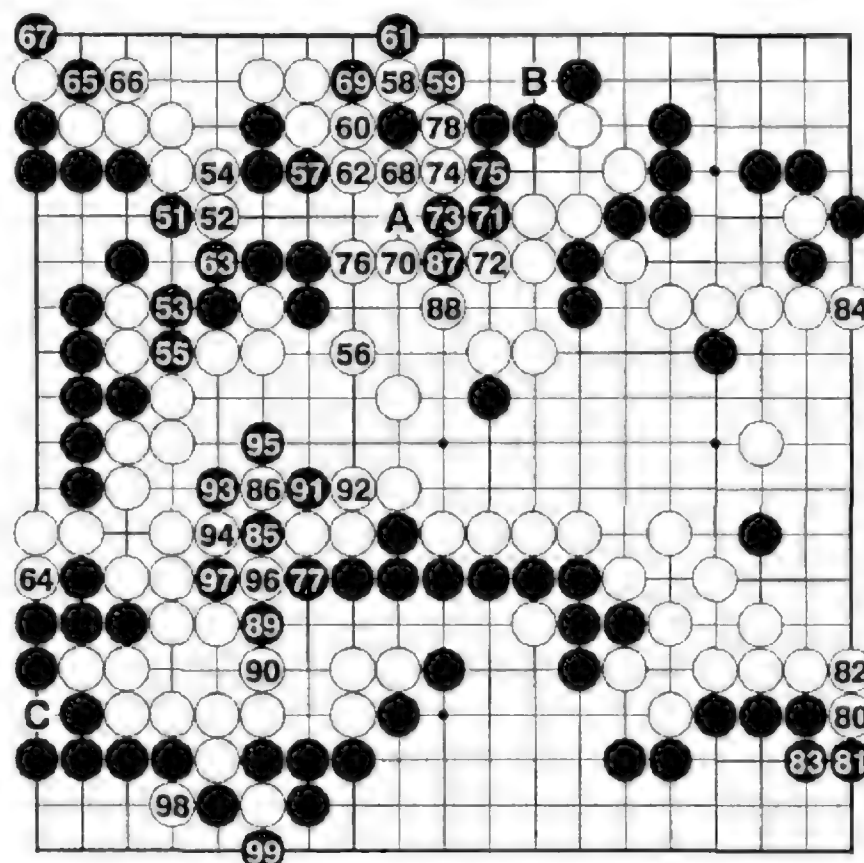


Figure 6 (151–200)

79: connects; 100: ko

Figure 6 (151–200). Mistakes by both

Komatsu: If White stresses the cutting point of 63, poking his head out with 58 to 62 becomes sente. The result is that he gets time to switch to 64, capturing five stones.

Takao: If Black uses 53 to connect at 63, White plans to defend at 66. Black 53 or a move one space above is sente, so playing 63 would be unbearably submissive. This clever footwork is typical of Cho. Even so . . .

Otake: Right. White becomes thin when Black captures at 55. And it wouldn't have been strange if White 76 had become the losing move. If White connected at A, he would secure the ko threats of B etc.

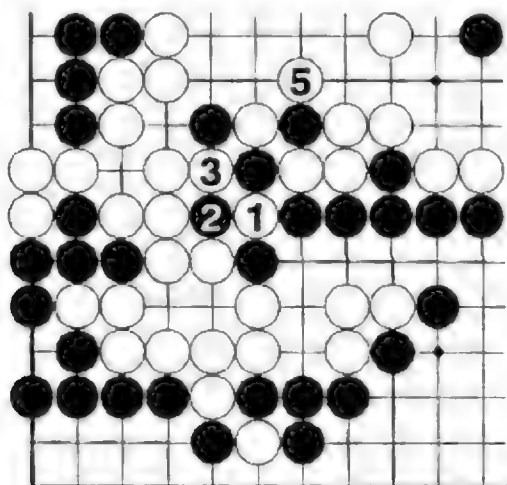
Komatsu: If Black had played 93 at 98, he would have won by half a point. This eliminates White's ko threats in sente [as White has to capture at C]. Next, Black plays at 93, and White won't be able to start the ko that he does.

Reporter: Yet another ko. There's just one thing I don't understand. In the game, it's

Black's turn to take the ko first, but, if White plays 96 before 94, isn't it White's turn to take the ko first. Well, a professional is hardly going to go wrong in a place like this, so I suppose there's a reason.

Otake: You bet there's a reason. There's no way someone who likes ko as much as Cho would go wrong.

Takao: Let's confirm this with *Dia. 18*. If White plays 1 before 3, Black will use 4 to connect at 1. White must capture at 5. Try counting it now.



*Dia. 18: Black wins
4: connects*

Komatsu: It's a half-point win for Black. The stone that White threw in at 1 makes the difference. I don't know how many times I counted this position. Right, Takao?

Takao: That's why Black can't avoid the ko by playing 95 at 96. White would capture 91, and Black would fall short by half a point for lack of White's throw-in.

Figure 7 (201–268). The fateful half point

Otake: There are various kinds of half-pointers: ones in which it's easy to imagine the result and ones in which it's not. This game is definitely one of the latter. The ko fight over half a point is inevitable, because the result in the end is half a point.

Takao: When the ko fight began, maybe White looked like winning by half a point. If he had ended the ko with White 20 at 1 in *Dia. 19*, he would have won. After White 5, Black can't afford to connect, but another ko follows after 6. However, White has more threats, so this would be a clear win for him.

Otake: Black ignores White's ko threat at 34. Who gains by this trade?

Komatsu: I think Black does.

Takao: But his later play . . .

Komatsu: The instant Black pulls back at 37, his loss is certain.

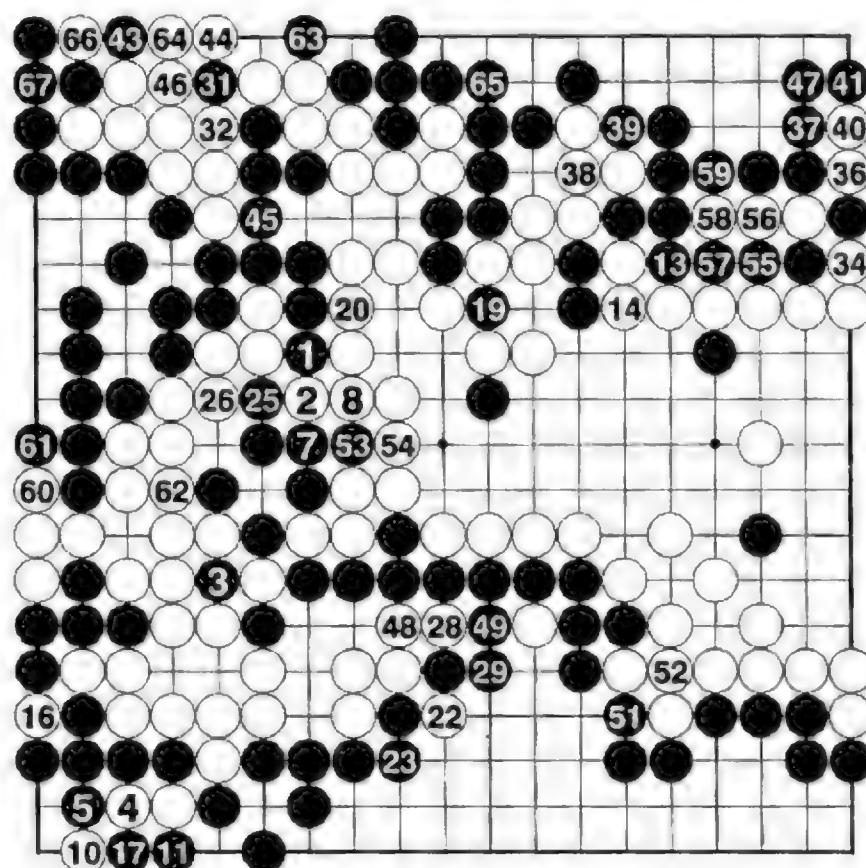
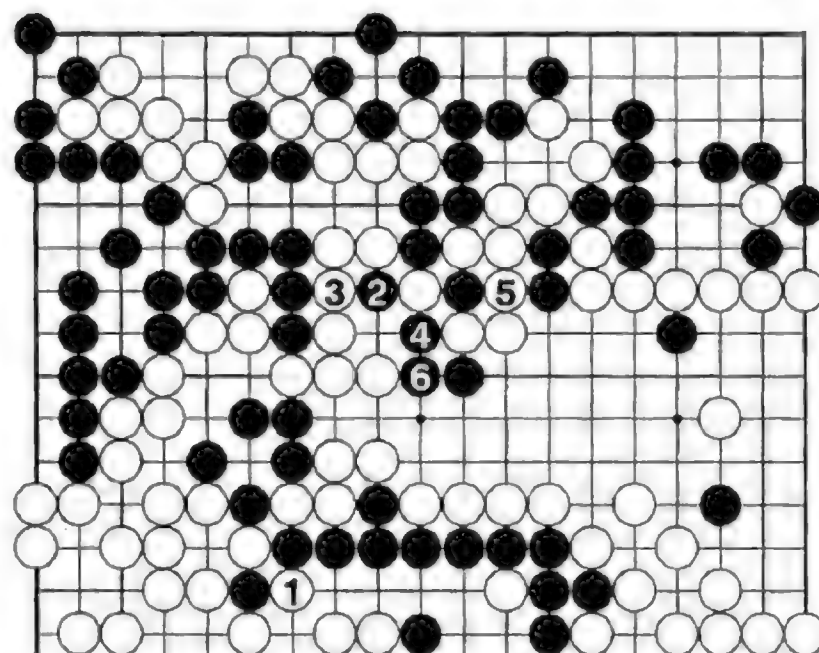
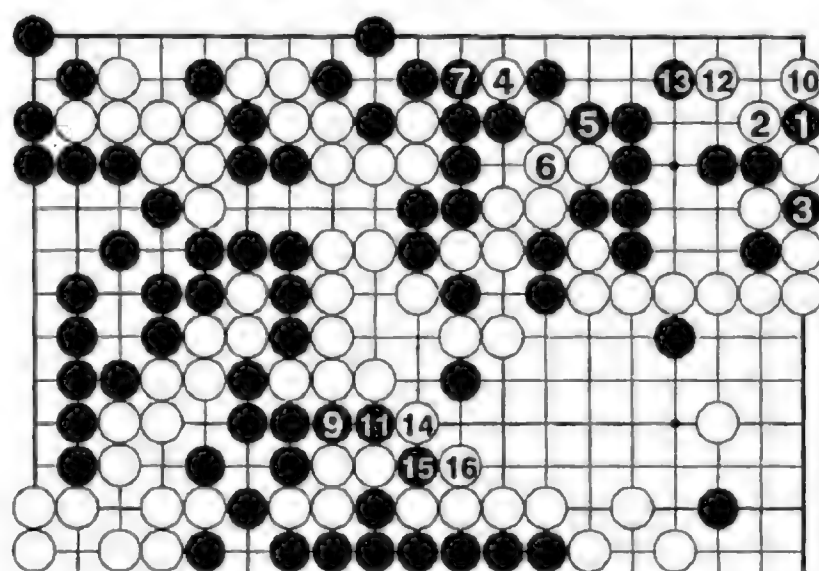


Figure 7 (201–268)

ko: 6, 9, 12, 15, 18, 21, 24, 27, 30, 33; 35: connects (right of 3); 42: connects (below 36); 50: connects (above 16); 68: connects (at 43)



Dia. 19: White wins



*Dia. 20: Black's last chance
8: ko*

Otake: Was blocking at 1 in *Dia. 20* the only move?

Komatsu: Yet another ko fight starts — it's exhausting.

Otake: So Black has ko threats at 9? White probably doesn't have enough, so perhaps he should end it here. Count the score after 16.

Takao: Black wins by half a point.

Komatsu: H'm. Why did Black give way with 37?

Reporter: There's no scope for accidents to happen after this?

Komatsu: There are no problems in the play after this.

Takao: The issue has been decided.

White wins by half a point.

(*Monthly Go World*, July 2004. Reported by Matsura Takahito.)

Game Two: Sudden death

White: Yoda Norimoto

Black: Cho U

Played in Fukuoka City on 24 & 25 May 2004.

Report by the staff of *Monthly Go World*.

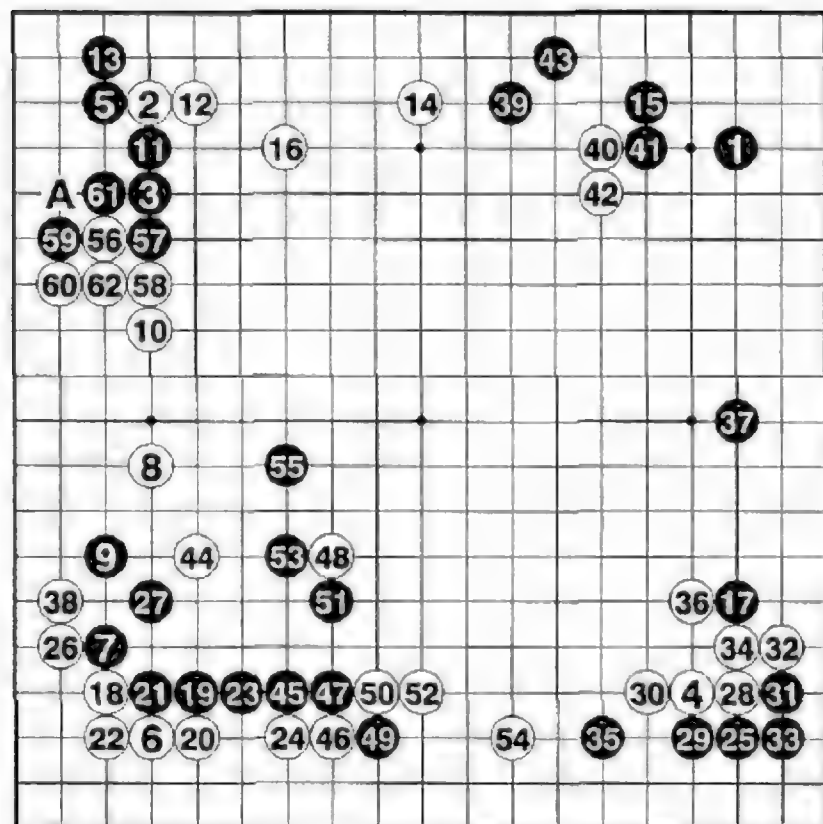
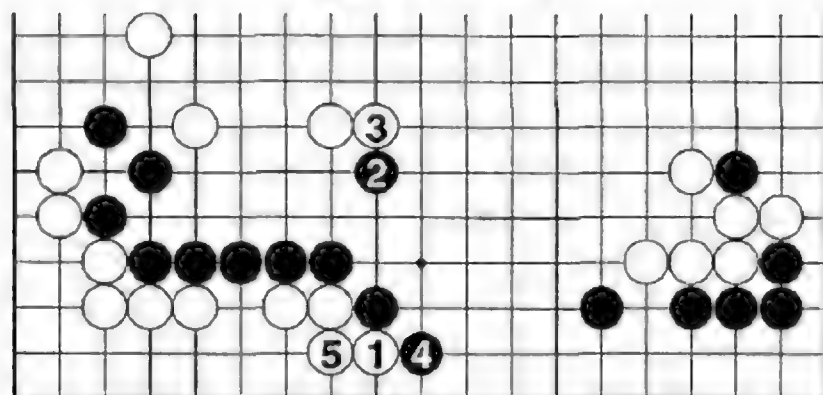


Figure 1 (1-62)



Dia. 1: alternative to cutting

Figure 1 (1-62). Trading territory for influence

The opening to 15 was unfamiliar. White was thought to have made the better start.

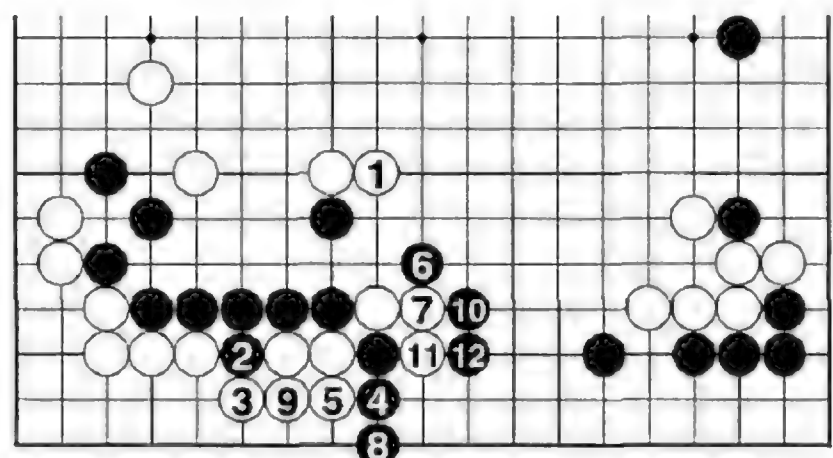
Black 21. One would like to play at 23, but the prospect of a white hane at 26 is disagreeable.

With 25 on, Black tries to match White in territory.

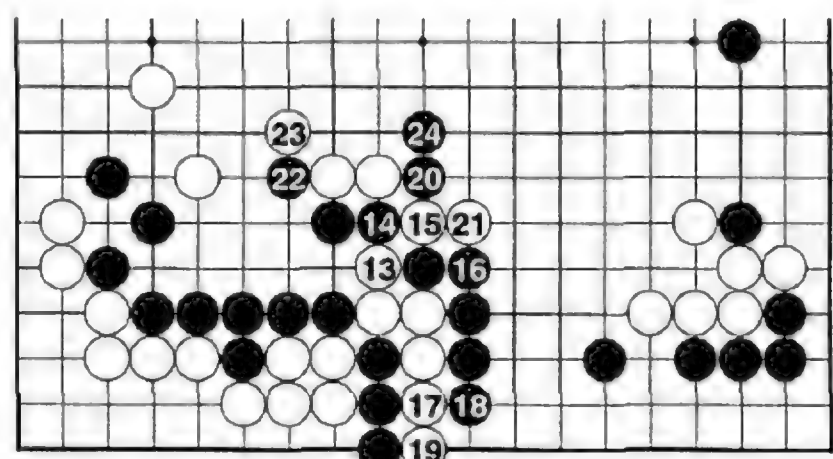
White 40, 42. Yoda's style is to settle the shape without indulging in fancy footwork. Perhaps these moves also glare at the black group in the distance in the bottom left.

Attacking with 44 and 48 feels good. However, Yoda had second thoughts about the cut of 50. 'Perhaps I should have answered at 1 in *Dia. 1*. It's bad style, though.' Being able to answer Black 2 at 3 is the strong point of this variation. White has to answer Black 4 patiently, but that can't be helped.

That doesn't mean that the cut of 50 is bad, however.



Dia. 2: looking bad for White



Dia. 3: disaster

White 52. If White plays 1 in *Dia. 2*, Black counters with 2 and 4, then presses at 6, which works perfectly. The continuation to 11 is forced. White has to capture the stones on the side, letting Black force in the centre.

Dia. 3. If White tries to counterattack with 13 on, he is close to collapse after the continuation to 24.

White therefore plays 52 and 54, taking profit but letting Black break through in the centre.

When Black cuts through the centre with 55, settling the white group with 56 on is par for the course. After 62, White is left with a very satisfying capture at A.

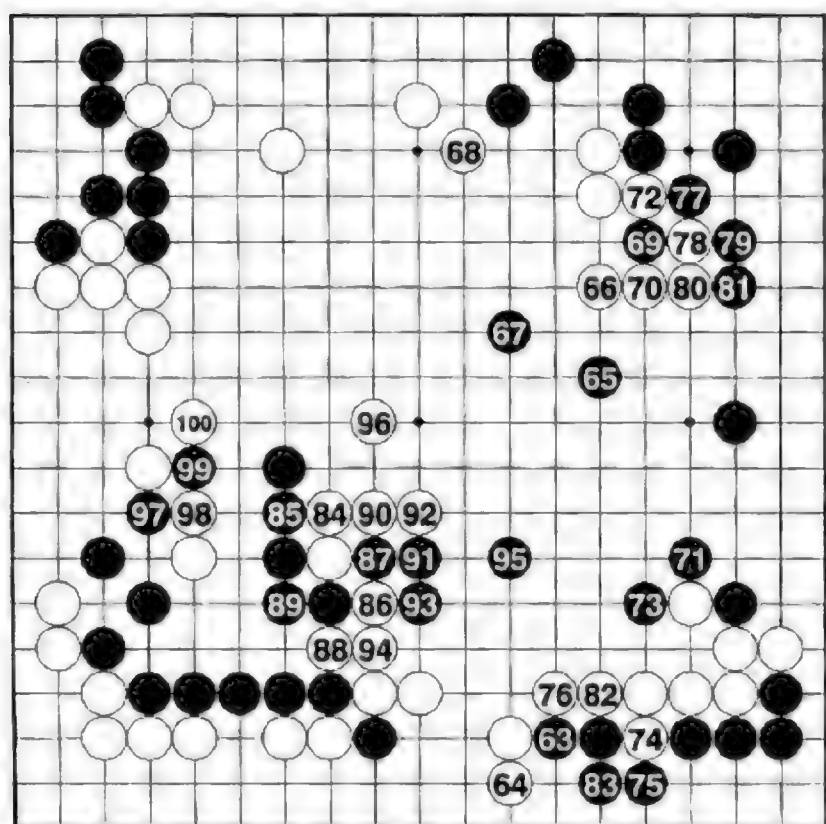
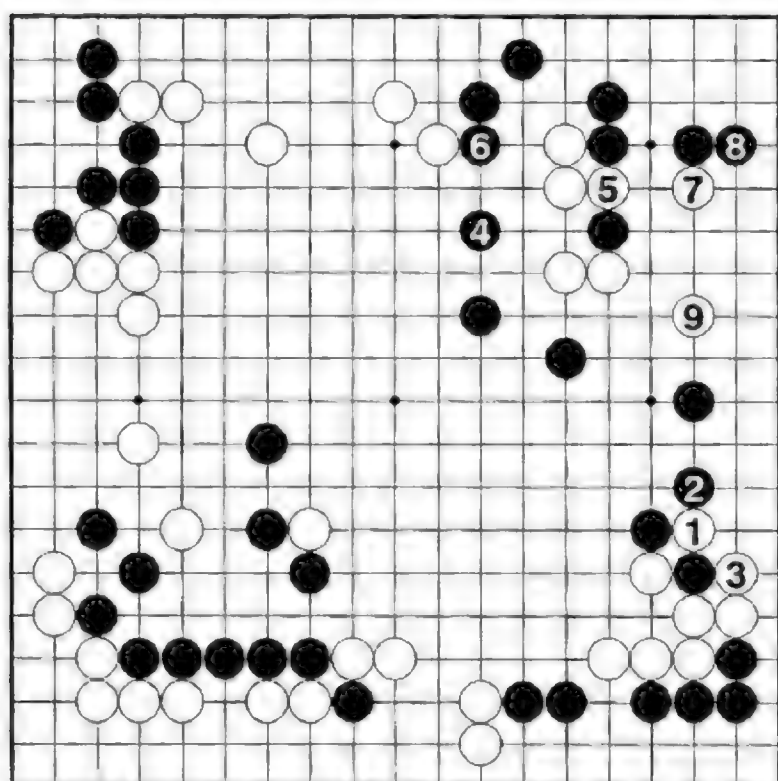


Figure 2 (63-100)



Dia. 4: a worrying attack

Figure 2 (63-100). Avoiding danger

Black takes flight with 65 and 67.

The timing of Black 71 is delicate. If White answers at 1 in *Dia. 4*, he has to worry about the strong attack of 4 and 6. After 7 and 9, Black's reinforcement at 2 might adversely affect the life and death of the white group. The professionals following the game on the spot — Ishida Yoshio, the referee, Kataoka Satoshi 9-dan, and Mizokami Tomochika 7-dan, the newspaper commentator — thought that this might be the decisive fight, but problems were avoided, as White defended at 72.

White 84 was the sealed move. Both sides used exactly three hours 30 minutes on the first day.

The cut of Black 87 is premature. 'Couldn't

be helped,' said Cho after the game. White 88 and 90 are severe. 'I didn't expect to be attacked this much,' lamented Cho.

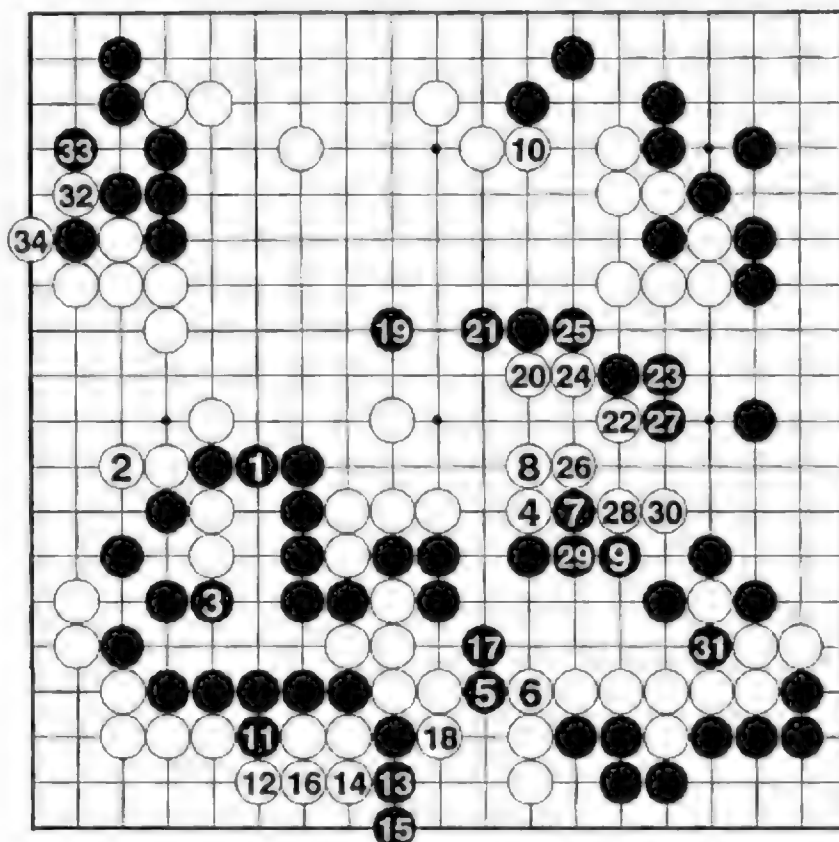
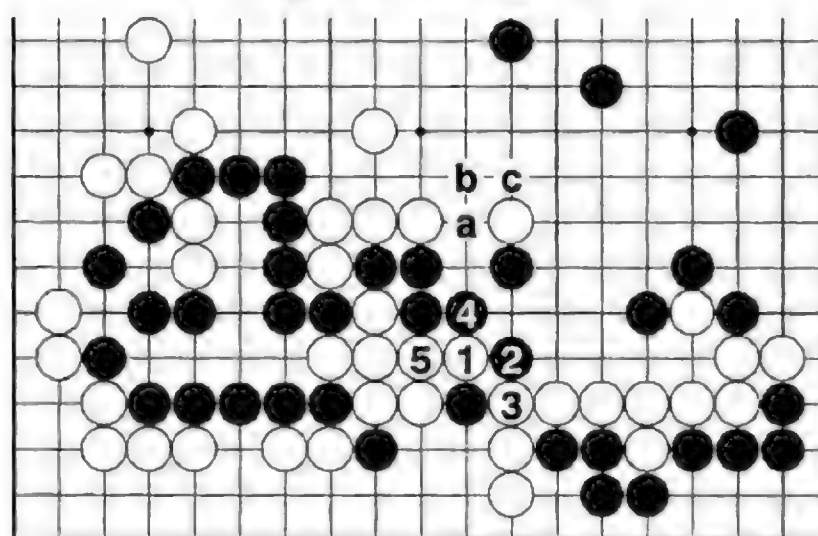


Figure 3 (101-134)



Dia. 5: better for White

Figure 3 (101-134). Yoda gives way.

White takes profit in sente with 2, then attaches at 4. Black's counter at 5 is a tricky move. To give the conclusion, White's cautious answer at 6 actually creates complications. Going all out for territory with 1 in *Dia. 5* might make the path to victory easier to understand. Up to 5, White gets quite a large territory at the bottom. Note that filling in a dame with 5 is important: it makes it hard for Black to start a ko with 'a'—White 'b'—Black 'c'.

When White plays 6, he accepts that Black can reduce his bottom area with 11 to 17. Yoda probably judged that his centre group wouldn't come under sudden attack and that if he defended at 10 at the top he had enough territory.

Black strikes at 19. White counterattacks and eats into black territory up to 30. The capture at 32 is really big.

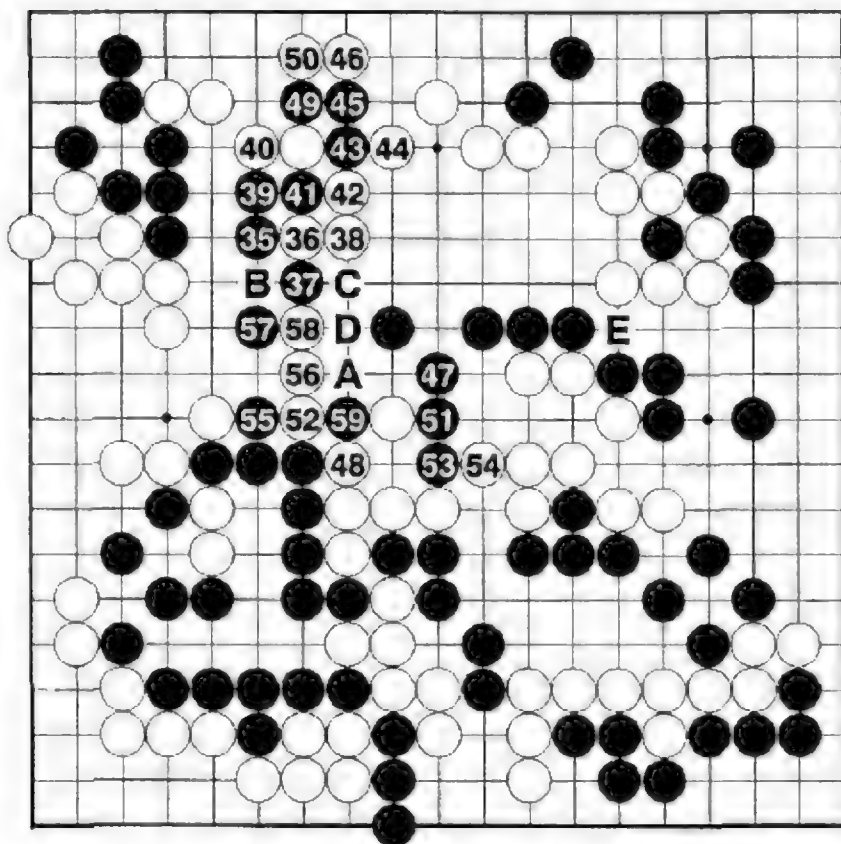
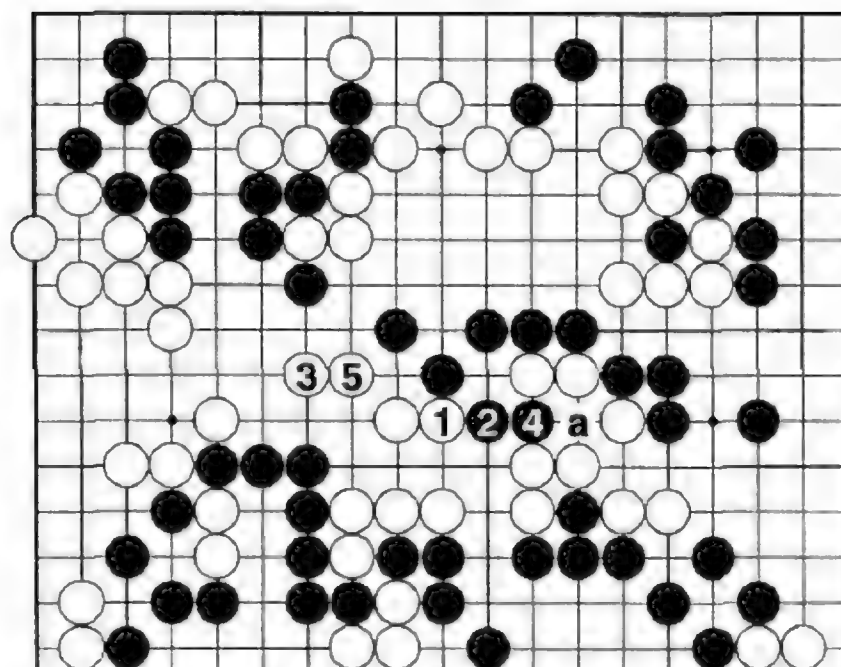


Figure 4 (135-159)



Dia. 6: White is safe

Figure 4 (135-159). A group drops off.

Black loses quite a few points with the cut of 43, but he has staked the game on his centre attack. He's more or less committed himself to capturing the white group. If White lives without giving up anything, he wins.

White 48 is the losing move. White could have saved the group if he had blocked at 1 in Dia. 6. The hane of Black 2 is the vital point, but dodging to 3 is a clever counter. After 5, White can connect either to the top or to the left. Black's capturing two stones at 'a' is sente, so the game is quite close, but the conclusion of the players studying the game in the pressroom was that White would have been a little ahead. Ishida and Kataoka are known for their endgame expertise, so we can trust their judgement.

Yoda was muttering furiously to himself at this stage, but apparently he believed that he could live with 48. The players in the pressroom

suffered from the same hallucination. Even after Black threw in at 59, it was a while before they realized the seriousness of the situation.

'Oh! The group's dropped off.' Ishida finally woke up. Soon after, Yoda resigned. It was still light outside: 4:11 in the afternoon. The reporters and photographers made a mad dash for the playing room.

The deciding blow was magnificent. If White answers 59 at A, Black plays B; if next White C, he can't win the capturing race after Black D-White E.

*White resigns after Black 159.
(Monthly Go World, July 2004)*

Game Three: Yoda on his mettle

White: Cho U

Black: Yoda Norimoto

Played in Toba City, Mie Prefecture on 31 May & 1 June 2004.

Report by Nakamura Chikako.

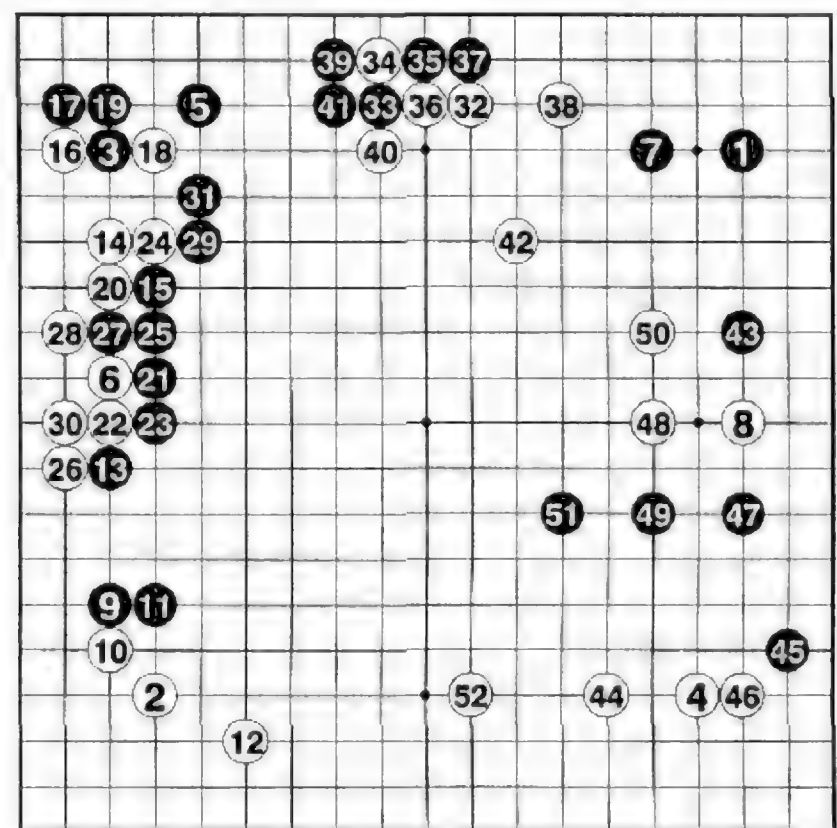


Figure 1 (1-52)

Figure 1 (1-52). A bold tenuki

As throughout the series, play proceeded at a fast pace, with 42 moves being played in the morning session. Both sides were satisfied with the opening: Black had thickness with good shape on the left side and White got to play the important splitting move of 32.

Hane Naoki Kisei expressed surprise at White 52. 'White is weak at the top and on the right side, so defending is par for the course. Switching elsewhere is a bold strategy.'

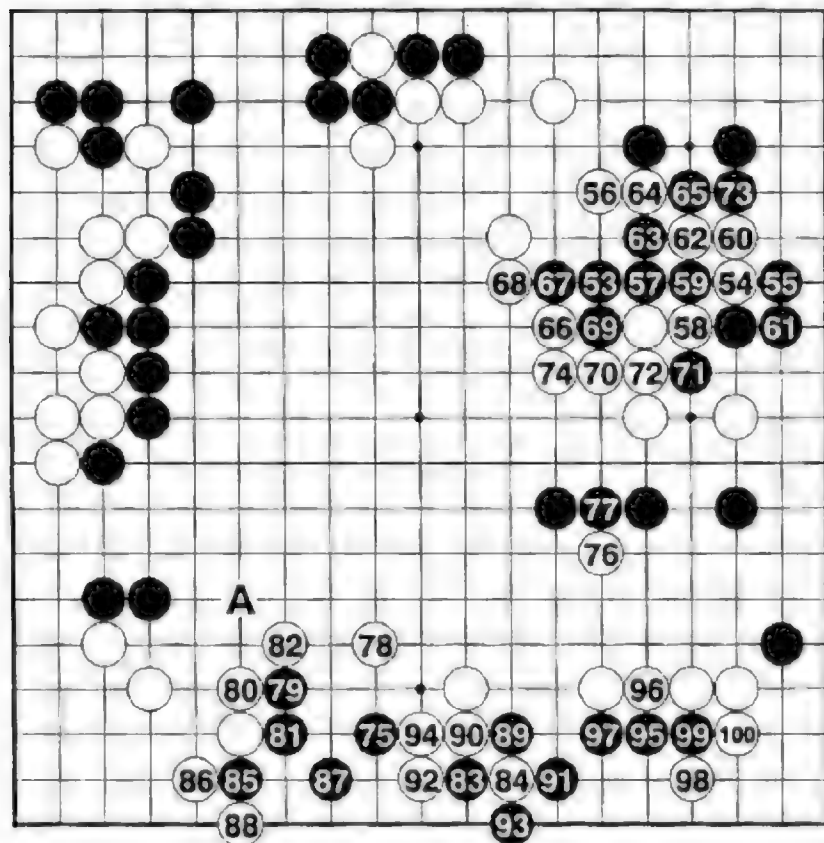
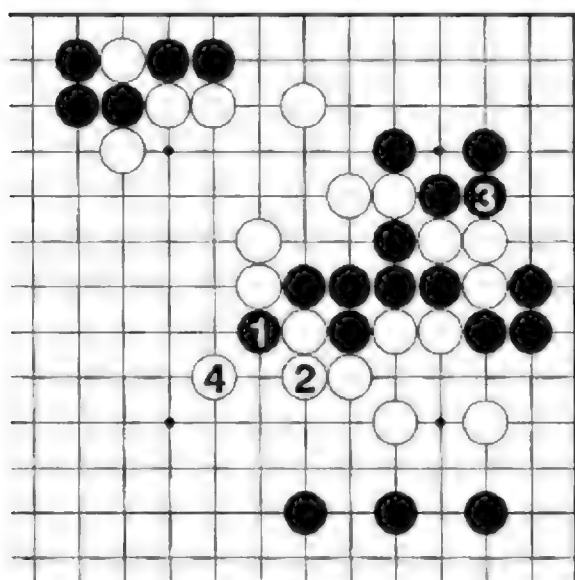
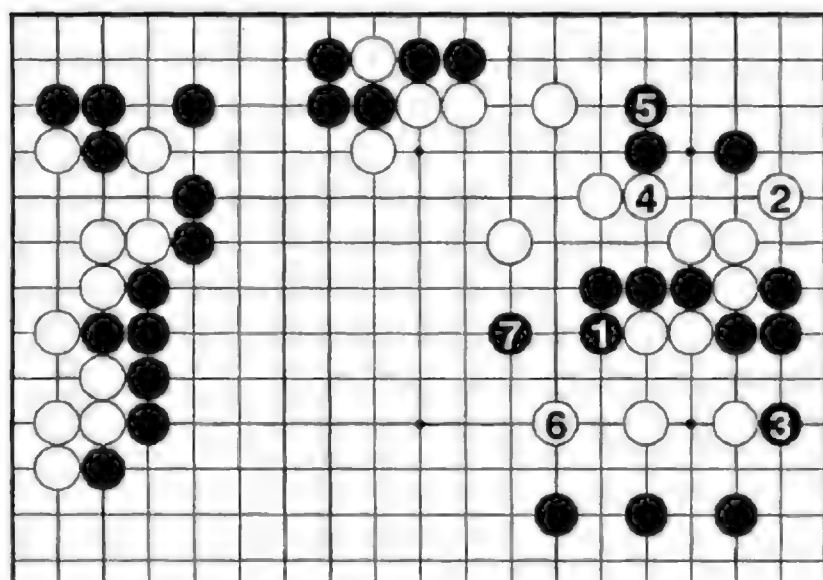


Figure 2 (53-100)



Dia. 1: geta



Dia. 2: better prospects for Black

Figure 2 (53-100). A clever sacrifice

White seems to be faced with a tough fight when Black drives a wedge between his groups with 53, but he is ready with a brilliant sacrifice tactic to save his groups. He gives up three stones, then presses at 66.

Black 71. If at 1 in *Dia. 1*, White 4 captures the cutting stone in a geta.

Hane: 'The result to 74 is a great success for

White. Instead of 63, Black should have followed *Dia. 2*. This fight is better than the game.'

Hane: 'As of the first day, I'd prefer to hold white.'

Yoda: 'When we suspended play on the first day, I thought the game was no good for me.'

The sealed move was Black 85. Yoda spent 40 minutes on it.

Cho: 'The game wasn't bad for me at this point, but I didn't know how to play after this.'

White 88. Making a diagonal connection at A would have been simpler. This ko proves to be a thorn in White's side.

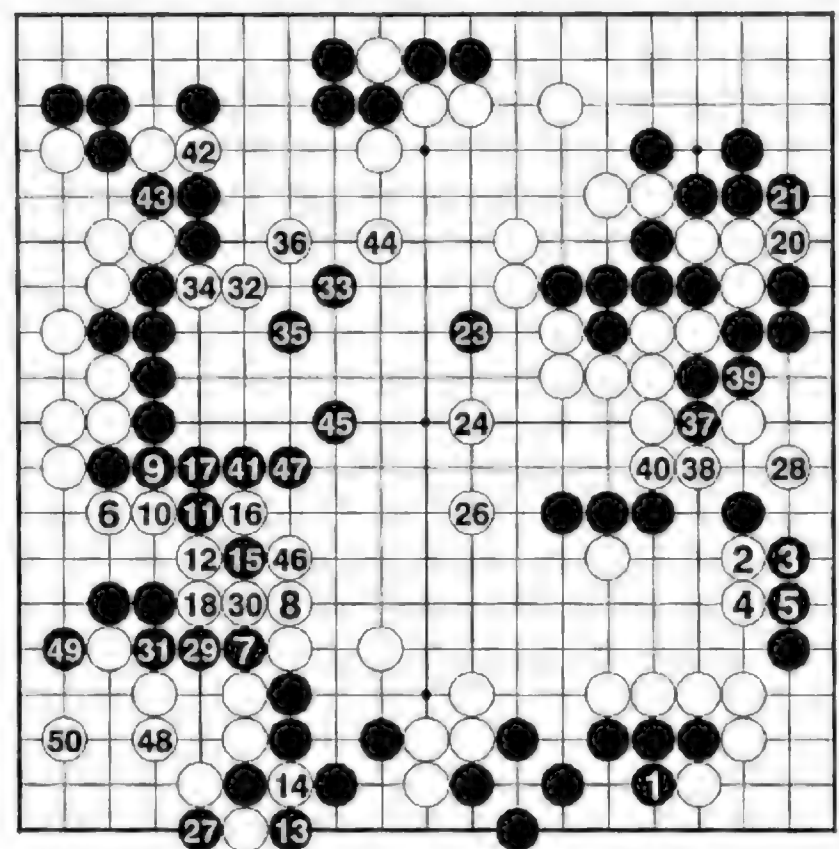
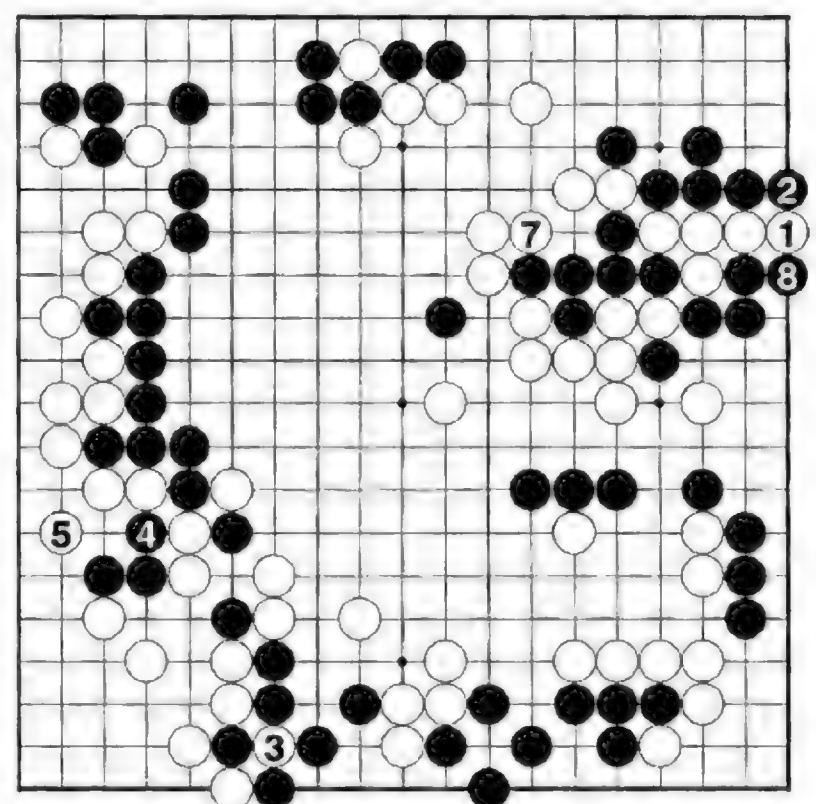


Figure 3 (101-150)

19, 22, 25: ko



Dia. 3: White's chance

6, 9: ko

Figure 3 (101-150). A lack of tenacity

Black 7 is a do-or-die move. The ko at 13 is a

nuisance. White is ahead, but storm clouds are gathering ahead.

Hane: 'The position is not clear with 26 and 28. Continuing the ko with 26 at 1 in *Dia. 3* would have been better. After White retakes the ko with 9, there are no black ko threats to be found. In the game, the issue is thrown into doubt.' Cho himself expressed keen regrets about 26 after the game, saying: 'I had to continue the ko fight.' It's inexplicable why Cho Honinbo, known for his fondness for ko, ceded the ko so readily.

With 48 and 50, a capturing race develops in the corner.

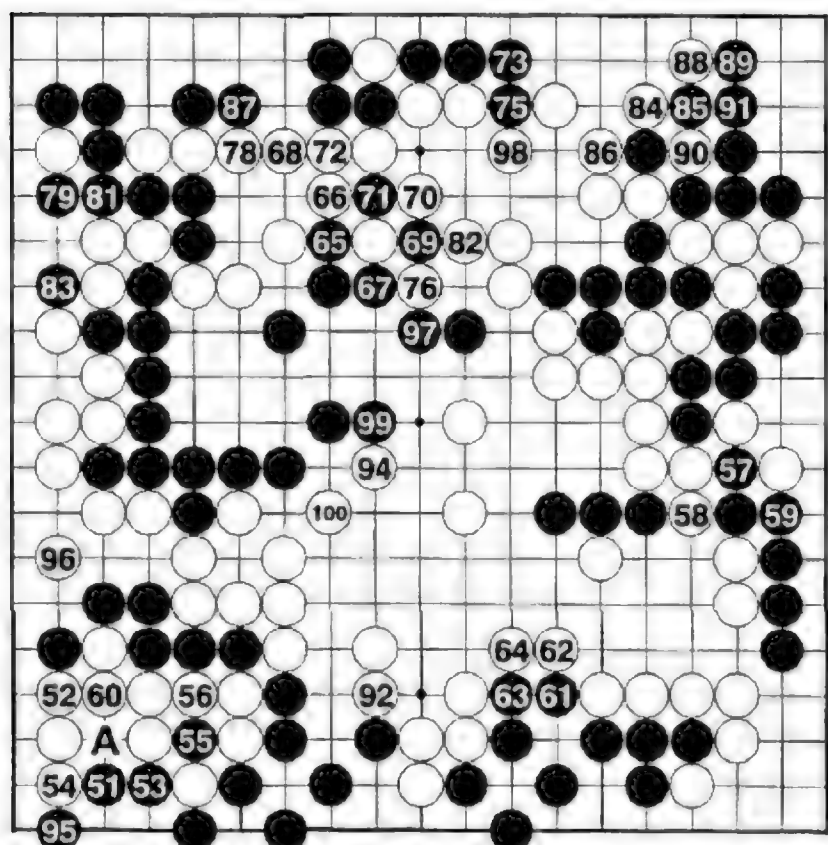


Figure 4 (151-200)

74: ko (left of 69); 77: ko (at 71); 80: ko (left of 69); 93: connects (below 55)

Figure 4 (151-200). Yoda's good judgement

Both sides miss the best moves in the fight. Correct for Black 51 is Black 52; White 52 should be at A. The result looks like being a ko; if it were, the players following the game thought this would favour White. However, a decisive stroke by Yoda settled the issue.

Playing successive moves at 57 and 59, without fighting the ko, shows good judgement. White wins the fight unconditionally with 60, but Black takes the lead with 61 to 67.

Black 81, 83. Ceding the centre ko in exchange for three black stones is a declaration of victory. Black has a sure lead of ten points on the board.

Figure 5 (201-247). Start of a fightback?

Fighting the kos with 10 and 30 is just a way of setting the scene for resignation.

This was a game in which the kos all went against Cho Honinbo. Now that Yoda had a win on the board, the match was on in earnest.

White resigns after Black 247.

(Monthly Go World, August 2004)

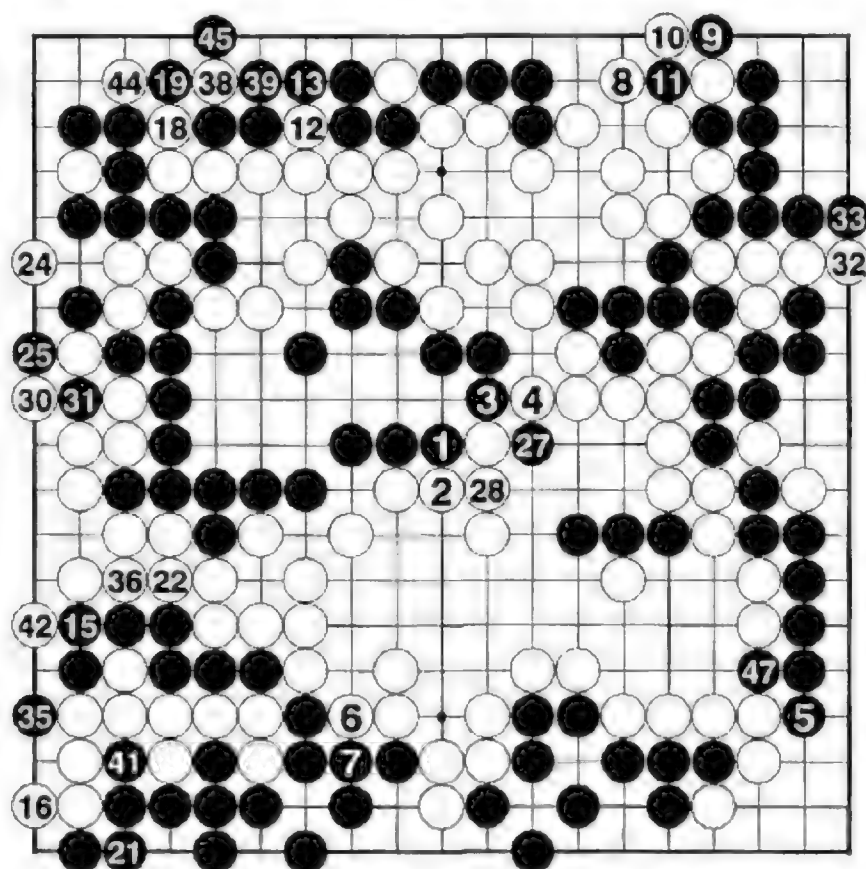


Figure 5 (201-247)

ko (top right): 14, 17, 20, 23, 26, 29;
ko (left side): 34, 37, 40, 43, 46

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Game Four: A bold tenuki

White: Yoda Norimoto

Black: Cho U

Played in Koya Town, Wakayama Prefecture on 17 & 18 June 2004. Commentary by Kobayashi Koichi 9-dan. Report by Oshima Masao.

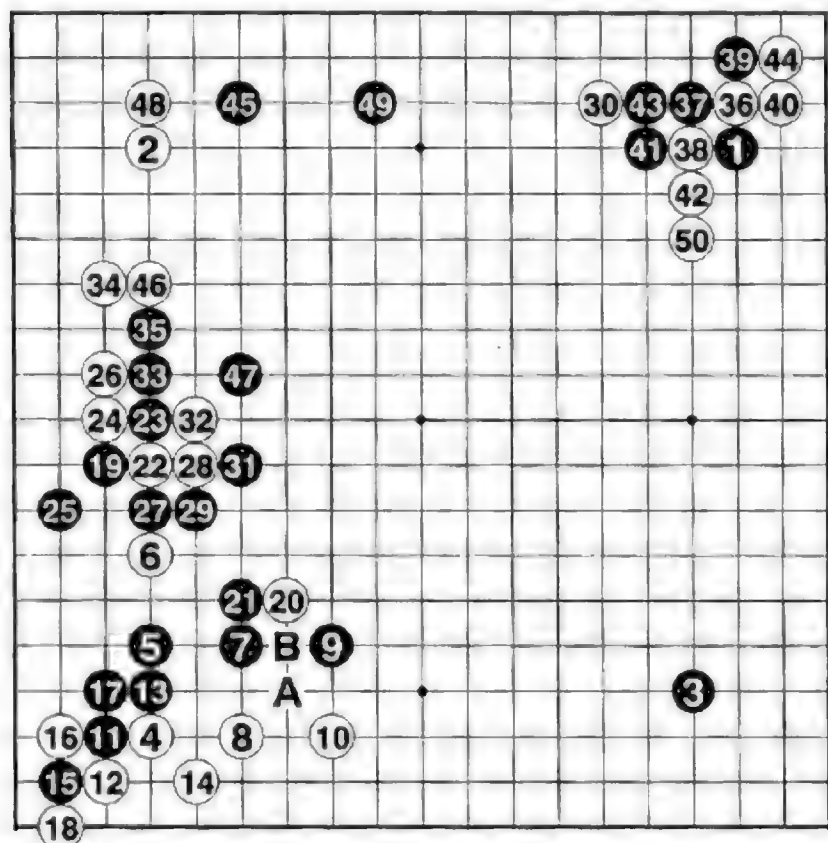
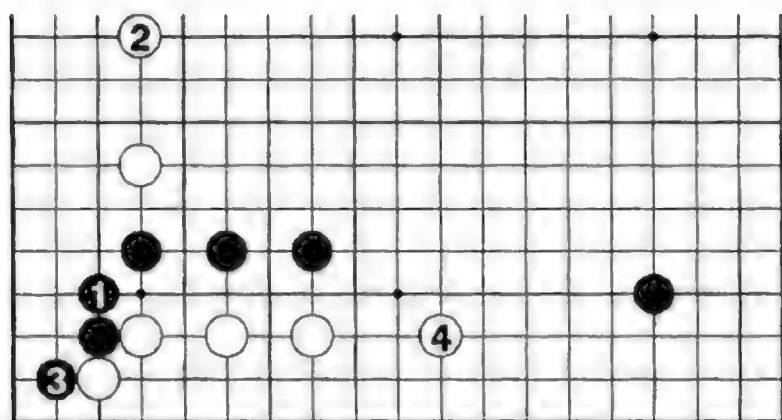


Figure 1 (1-50)



Dia. 1: good for White

Figure 1 (1-50). White's dubious strategy

The key point in the fuseki comes up in the bottom left corner. After the sequence to 18, Black 19 becomes a large point, so I think this result is a little painful for White.

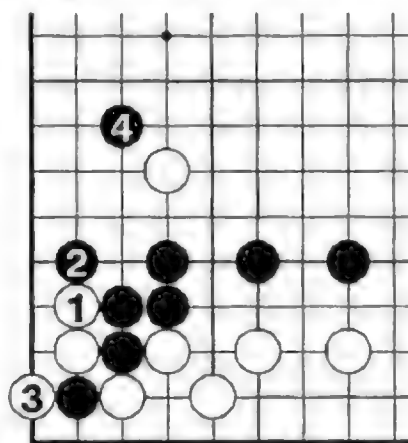
If I were playing white, I'd switch 10 to the two-space extension of 23; if Black then plays 10, White exchanges A for Black B, then switches to a large point elsewhere.

Black 13 and 15 are a tesuji for settling oneself. If Black plays 13 at 1 in Dia. 1, White makes successive extensions at 2 and 4, leaving Black dissatisfied.

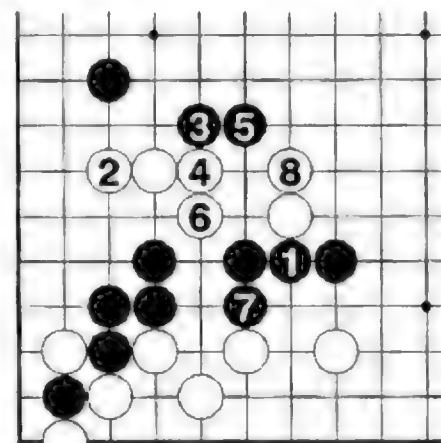
White has no choice about 18. If he plays 1 and 3 in Dia. 2, Black 4 makes good shape.

The peep of White 20 is a probe. If Black connects at 1 in Dia. 3, White 2 is severe. The

sequence shown here is just one possible continuation. White can handle this fight. White's strong point when Black connects at 1 is that the peep of 6 also becomes sente.



Dia. 2: good shape



Dia. 3: good for White

White is content to have created the option of pushing down at B; he makes a crosscut with 22 and 24 in order to settle himself.

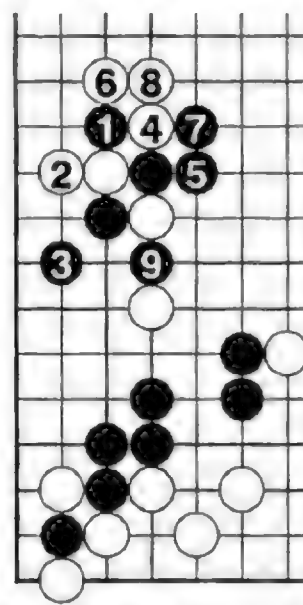
Black 25. Another possibility is to follow Dia. 4, but up to 9 White successfully settles himself [good *sabaki* sometimes entails giving up the original stone, i.e., at 6 in the figure].

Up to 31, Black settles himself and takes territory, so he has no grounds for dissatisfaction. I'd prefer to be holding black. There is, after all, something dubious about the result to 18.

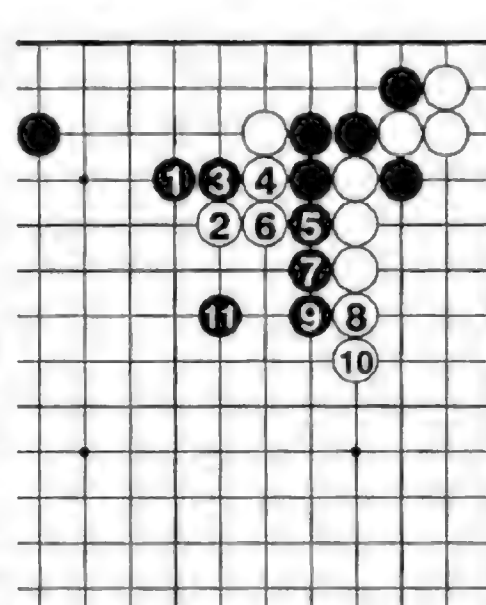
Incidentally, eight players out of ten would use 30 to extend at 31, but there are no weaknesses left to aim at in Black's bottom left group. White 30 shows Yoda's flexibility.

White 32 and 34 show that White is treating these stones as light stones. He is prepared to give them up at any time if Black tries to capture them.

The sequence from 36 to 49 seems inevitable. White 50 is also a natural move.



Dia. 4: White satisfied



Dia. 5: better

Figure 2 (51-100). Black's lead disappears.

Black 51 is dubious. White has just built up strength here with 50 in Figure 1. In spite of this, Black turns at 51, close to White's strong wall.

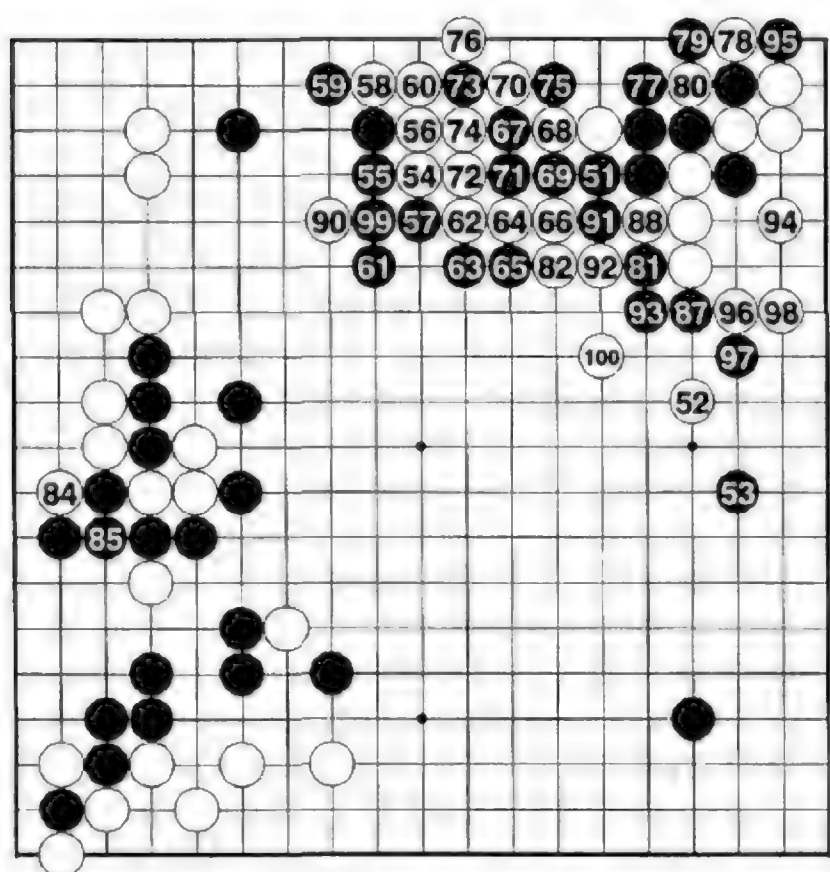
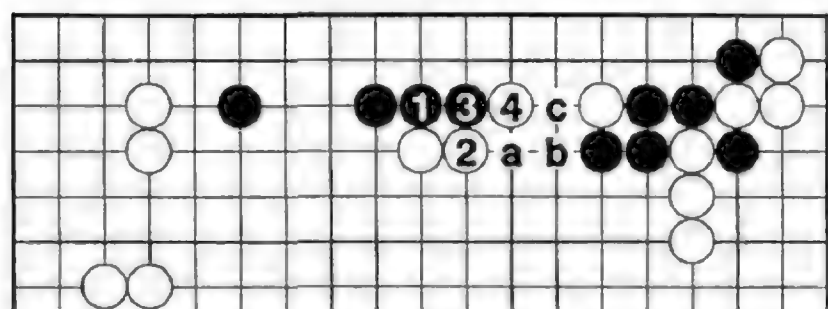


Figure 2 (51-100)
83, 86, 89: ko

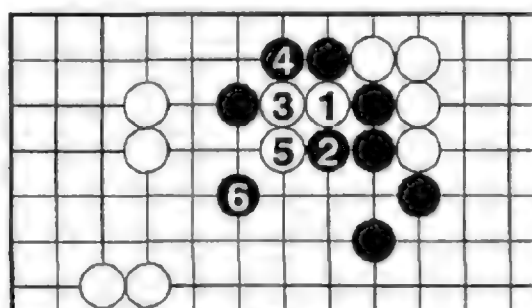


Dia. 6: bad for Black

The exchange of 52 for 53 is also an efficient one for White. It helps make preparations for starting a fight at the top. Blocking at 56 after the shoulder hit of 54 is a strong move. Perhaps Cho overlooked this move. With this development, the slight lead Black had held goes up in smoke.

Therefore, Black should have used 51 to take up position with 1 in *Dia. 5*. The continuation here is one possibility. Black's moves at 3 and 5 have a natural rhythm; up to 11, he welcomes the fight.

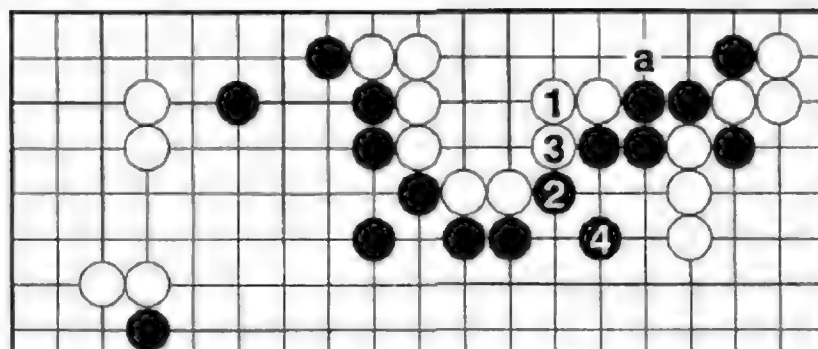
Black 55. If Black crawls with 1 and 3 in *Dia. 6*, he has no answer to White 4: if Black 'a', White 'b'; if Black 'c', White 'b'.



Dia. 7: geta

White 58 and 60 are effective moves. Black has no choice but to defend with 61. Thanks to this move, he can set up a geta if White cuts at 1 in *Dia. 7*.

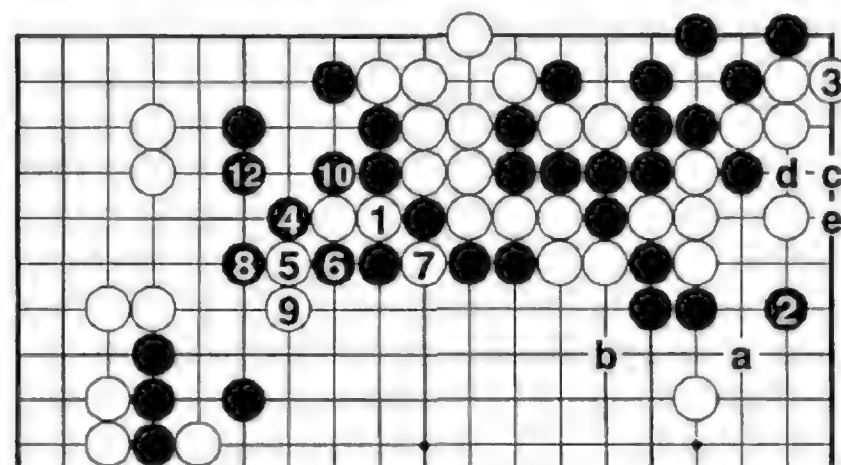
In the end, White is able to force his way out with 62 to 66. Black's early lead has been blown away. Note that White 66 is the only move — White can counter Black's blow at the vital point of 67 with 68. Huddling up on the inside with 1 in *Dia. 8* would be painful when Black seals him in with 2 and 4. Black 'a' will also be sente, so the top right white group is greatly weakened.



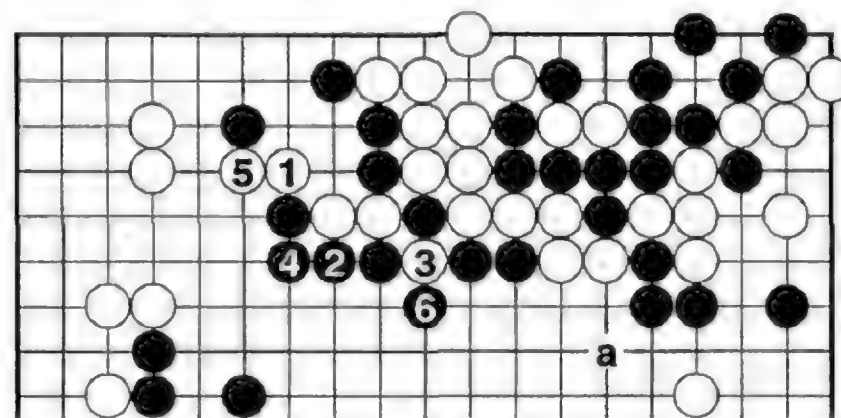
Dia. 8: sealed in

Black 73 is natural momentum. The exchange to 77 is inevitable. Fighting a ko with 79 shows a rigorousness typical of Cho.

When White plays the ko threat of 90, Black forces with 91 and 93, then finishes off the ko with 95. Playing 96 and 98 in spite of having made a ko threat at 90 may seem a little mystifying, but there is a reason. If White plays 96 at 1 in *Dia. 9*, Black 2 is sente. Later, Black 'a' or 'b', aiming at Black 'c'—White 'c'—Black 'e', will also be sente, so Black's group becomes thick on the side and in the centre. On top of that, Black can settle his top left group by attaching at 4; if White 5, Black easily looks after the group thanks to the cut of 6. Instead of 5 —



Dia. 9: easy sabaki 11: connects

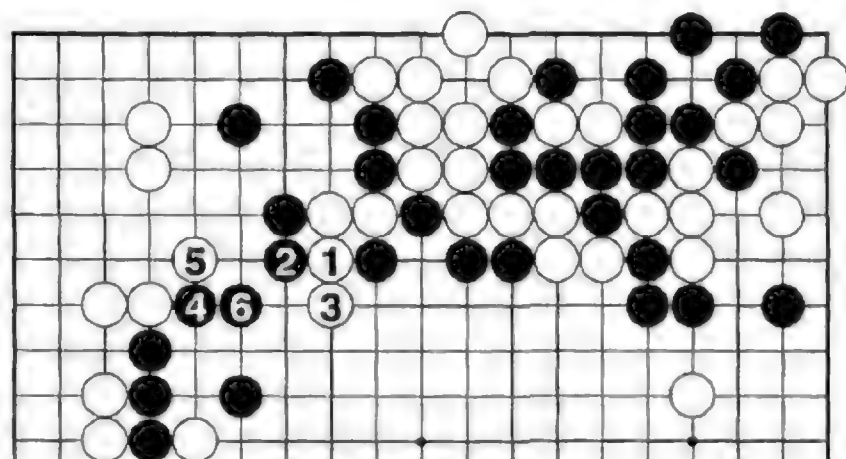


Dia. 10: Black becomes thick

Dia. 10. If White 1 and 3, Black plays 4 and

6. Later, capturing above 3 will be sente. Black 'a' is also sente, so Black becomes thick. Another possibility is White 1 in *Dia. 11*, but Black links up with 2 and 4.

The splendid fighting exchange to 100 gives a close game.



Dia. 11: Black links up

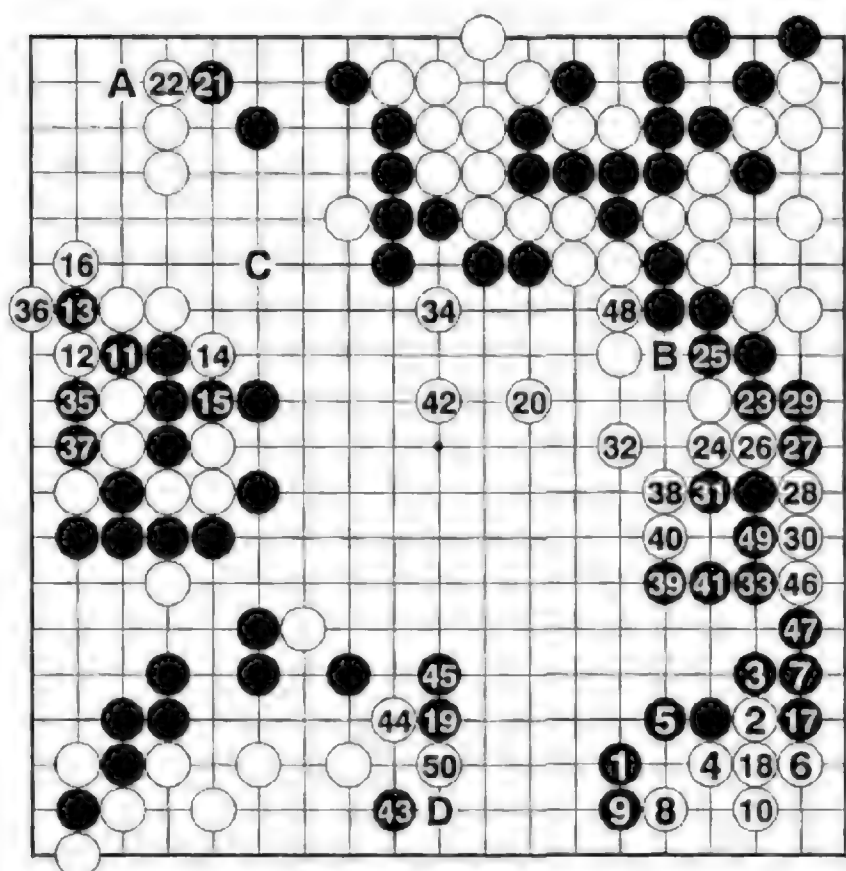


Figure 3 (101-150)

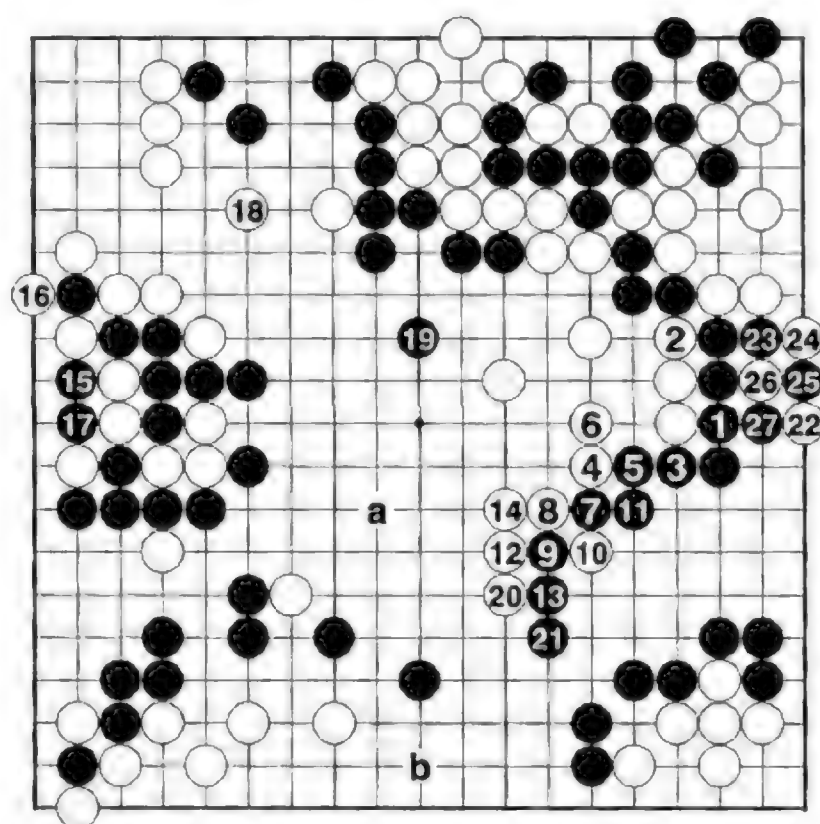
Figure 3 (101-150). White misses his chance.

Black 1. The second round of the middle game begins. Black 3 next would be really big, so White 2 is natural. The continuation to 10 is a one-way street.

Black 21 aims at jumping in at A, which is big in itself and would also secure eye shape. White 22 shows that Yoda believes this is good enough to win.

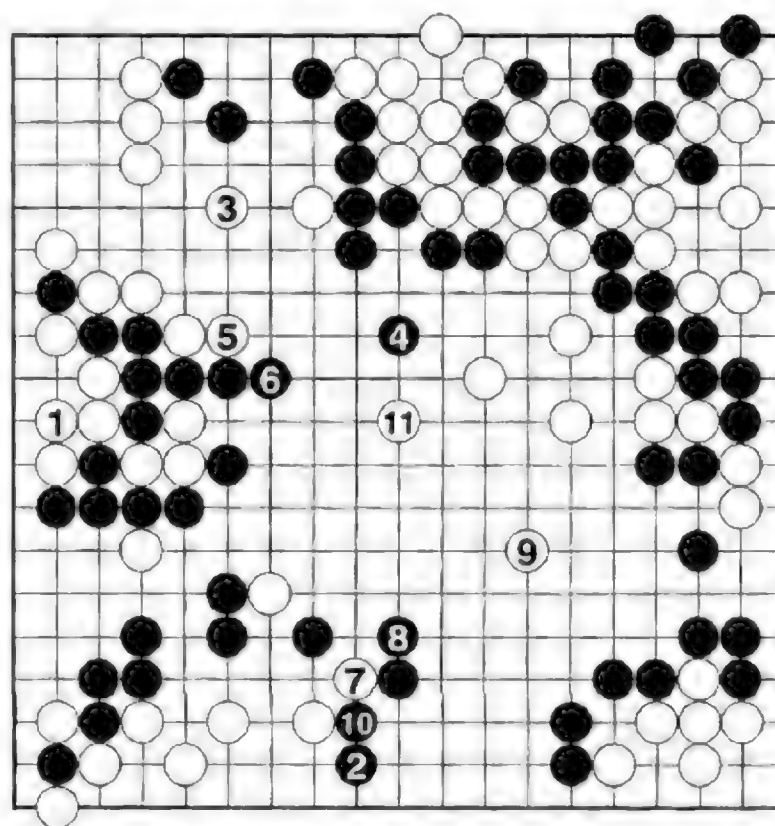
Black 25 is dubious. White makes a sacrifice up to 30 and gets a favourable position. Later, White 38 and 40 are sente, and White can also force with 48 and B, so White becomes thick in the centre. Black will have to take the two white stones off the board, so his territory is not as big as it looks. Consequently, connecting at 1 in *Dia. 12* is the only move: Black should sacrifice his three stones, letting White cut at 2. The continua-

tion to 27 can be hypothesized; White will next play at 'a' or 'b', and the game will be close.



Dia. 12: a close game

Since playing 22, Yoda has been aiming at attacking the black group at the top. If Black defends in response to 34, he will lose the game. Having made this judgement, Cho goes for profit with 35 and 37. The game has become difficult.



Dia. 13: good for White

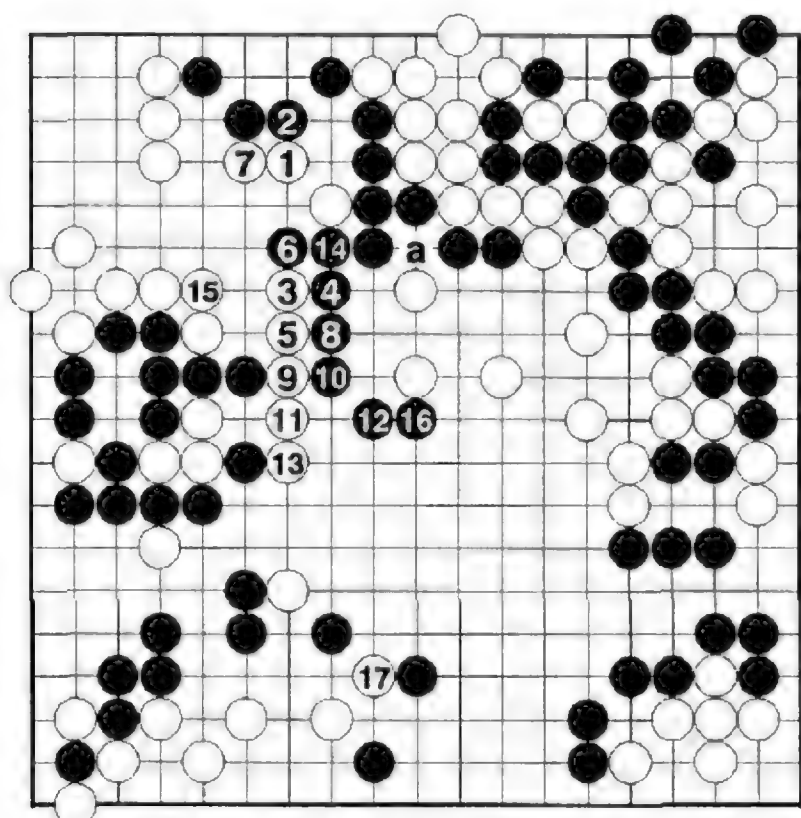
Instead of 34, connecting at 1 in *Dia. 13* is best; it makes the game promising for White. If Black 2, White attacks with 3. Thanks to 1, pushing up at 5 becomes sente. Later, White expands the centre with 9 and 11 and has the lead.

Yoda must have believed that White 42 would be sente. Black 43 is a do-or-die move — if he defended at the top at C, White would slide to D.

Cho U reads deeply at the key points in the fighting (*tedokoro*); he attacks severely and is also strong at *shinogi* (rescuing weak groups). His strong points all come into play with Black 43.

White 44 is the losing move. White may reduce the bottom area with the sequence after 50, but Black defends at 59 in the next figure, and White is no longer in the game.

Consequently, White had no choice but to use 44 to launch the strong attack he had been aiming at for some time with 1 in *Dia. 14*.



Dia. 14: White must attack

Dia. 14. If Black 2 and 4, White extends at 5. White 5 at 8 would be unreasonable: Black hanes at 6. Black 8 at 14 would be risky: White connects at 15, and Black would probably not survive. The continuation to 16 is more or less inevitable; White 17 comes next. White has reduced Black's centre and still has White 'a' left. He also looks forward to harassing the large black group. Black might be a little ahead, but the subsequent play will be difficult, so White would probably still be in the game.

Figure 4 (151–200), Figure 5 (201–287). An upset for Cho, a *kadoban* for Yoda

Defending at 59 decides the game.

Cho scored an upset win and forced his opponent to a *kadoban* (a game that might lose a series). His schedule will continue to be hectic, but this is the time for him to go all out.

Black wins by 7½ points.

(*Monthly Go World*, August 2004)

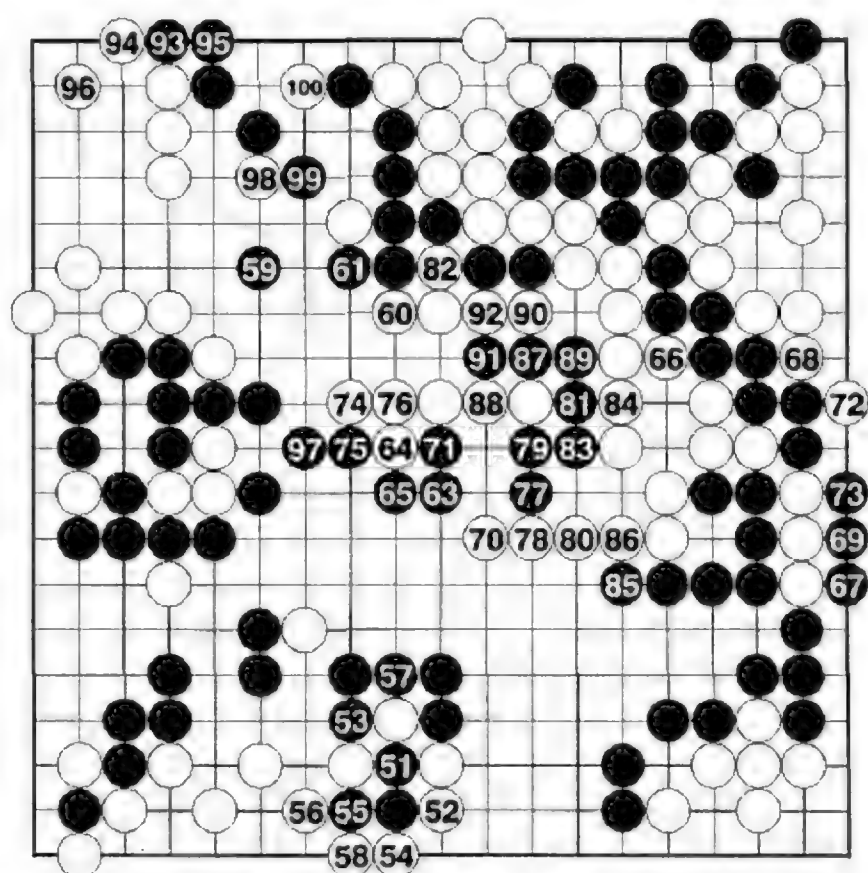


Figure 4 (151–200)

62: captures three stones (above 51)

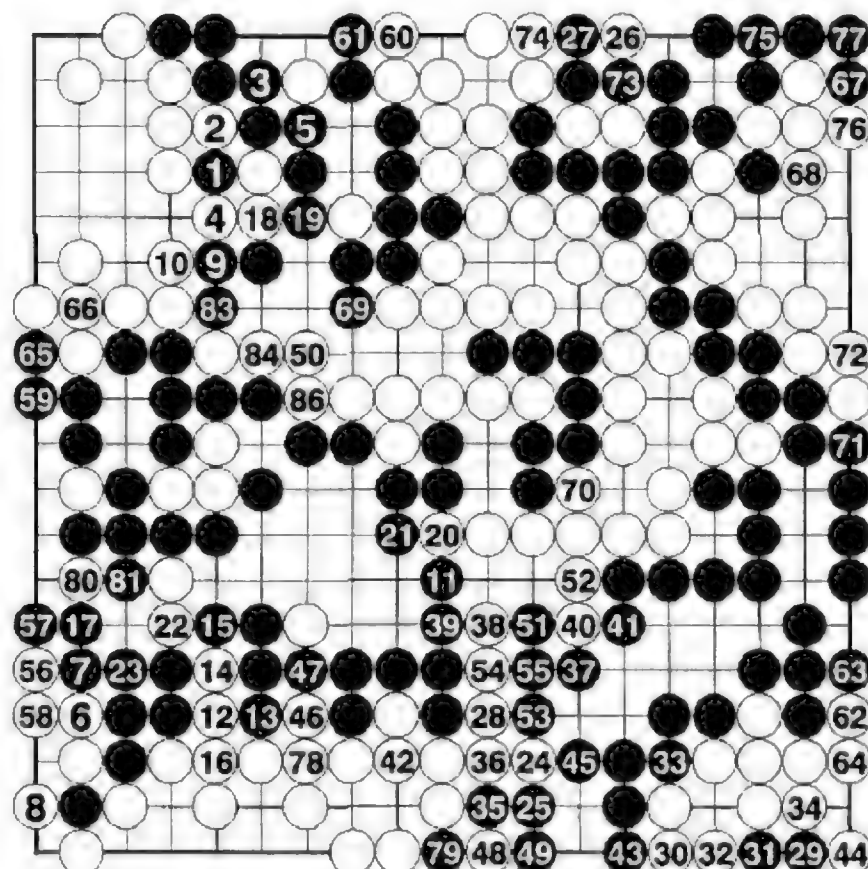


Figure 5 (201–287)

*82: ko (at 48); 85: ko (at 79);
87: connects (at 48)*



Cho racks up his third win.

Game Five: Staying in the match

White: Cho U

Black: Yoda Norimoto

Played in Hiratsuka City, Kanagawa Prefecture on 24 & 25 June 2004. *Commentary: An abridged version of a round-table discussion among Komatsu Hideki 9-dan, O Rissei Judan, and Kubo Hideo 5-dan (reporter not named).*

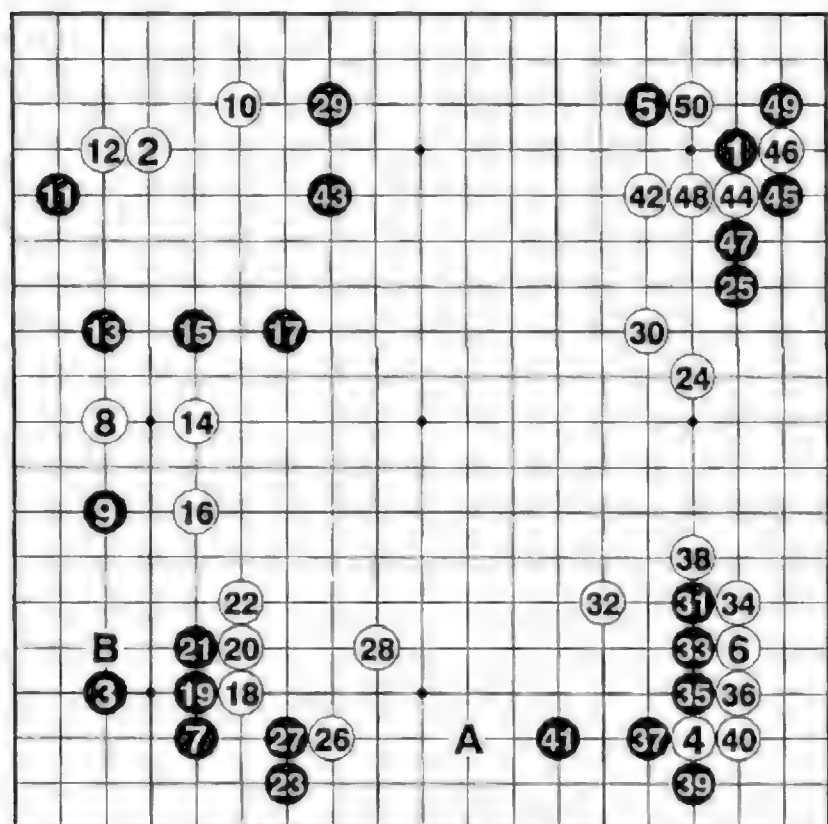
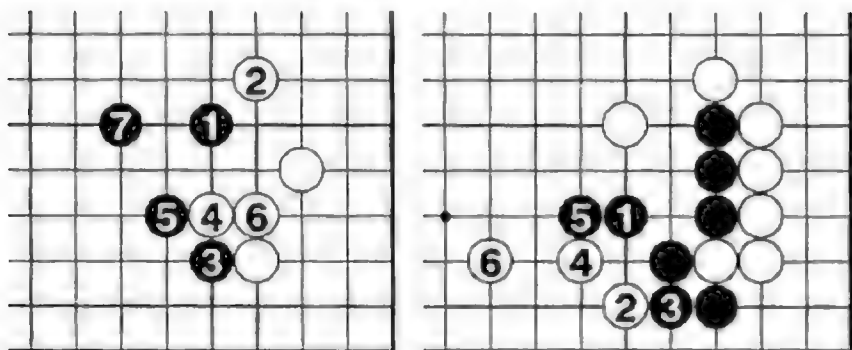


Figure 1 (1-50)



Dia. 1: good for Black Dia. 2: good for White

Figure 1 (1-50). Influencing each other

Komatsu: Black 11 is an interesting move.

O: Right. The usual move is Black A, expanding Black's position while hampering the development of White's. White then usually jumps to 14.

Komatsu: Yoda usually stakes out solid positions, but here he is getting into potentially messy fighting with 11. Perhaps he's been affected by Cho's territorial style. A couple of times in this series Yoda's play has been too mild territorially.

O: Cho is also being influenced by his opponent. The centre-oriented moves of 18 to 28 are a new realm for him.

[White could live on the side by attaching at B instead of 18. These variations have been

omitted.]

O: With white, Yoda doesn't rush to take profit, but instead sets up solid positions. With black, he goes all out for profit.

Komatsu: Yoda starts reducing early with 31.

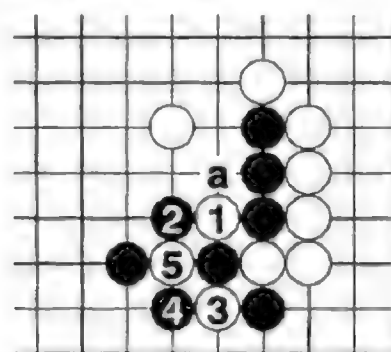
Kubo: How was this? I have some doubts.

Komatsu: For 31, Black 1 in *Dia. 1* would be good enough. That's my conclusion. If White 2, Black forces with 3 and 5, then takes up position with 7. When I mentioned this to Rissei recently, he agreed that this was good for Black.

O: Eh? Don't rely on my opinion. Though, this does look good for Black.

Kubo: In the game, the black group is quite cramped. White 38 follows the large-avalanche joseki, but White has an ally in place at 32. The presence of this stone is significant. If Black plays 41 at 1 in *Dia. 2*, White attacks fiercely with 2.

O: Black will be severely harassed. You could say White is clearly ahead.



Dia. 3: ko aji

Komatsu: [After 41] White has the aji of a ko. Instead of 44, he could cut at 1 in *Dia. 3*. [If White 3 at 'a', Black plays 4 and settles his group, but] White starts a ko fight with 3 and 5.

Reporter: Is the ko inevitable?

Kubo: If Black 2 at 4, White plays 2, and Black's eye shape is dubious. If Black plays 4 at 'a', White plays 4, and Black doesn't have even one eye. Black has no choice about 2 and 4.

[The players investigated the question of whether White can win the ko fight without reaching a definite conclusion.]

Figure 2 (51-80). White misses a chance to reinforce.

Kubo: In the end, White doesn't start the ko. Once he's played 54 and 56, he can hardly aim at the ko. If he wins the ko after White A and Black 75, then the stone at 56 will be superfluous. The value of the ko has been greatly reduced.

O: White 54 and 56 were dubious. Maybe Cho was confident in his position.

Komatsu: Yoda said that if White had played 54 at 60 he planned to defend at 55. So, how

about playing 54 at 1 in *Dia. 4*? White defends the upper left corner and eliminates potential ko threats. After waiting for the natural move of Black 2, White then heads to 3.

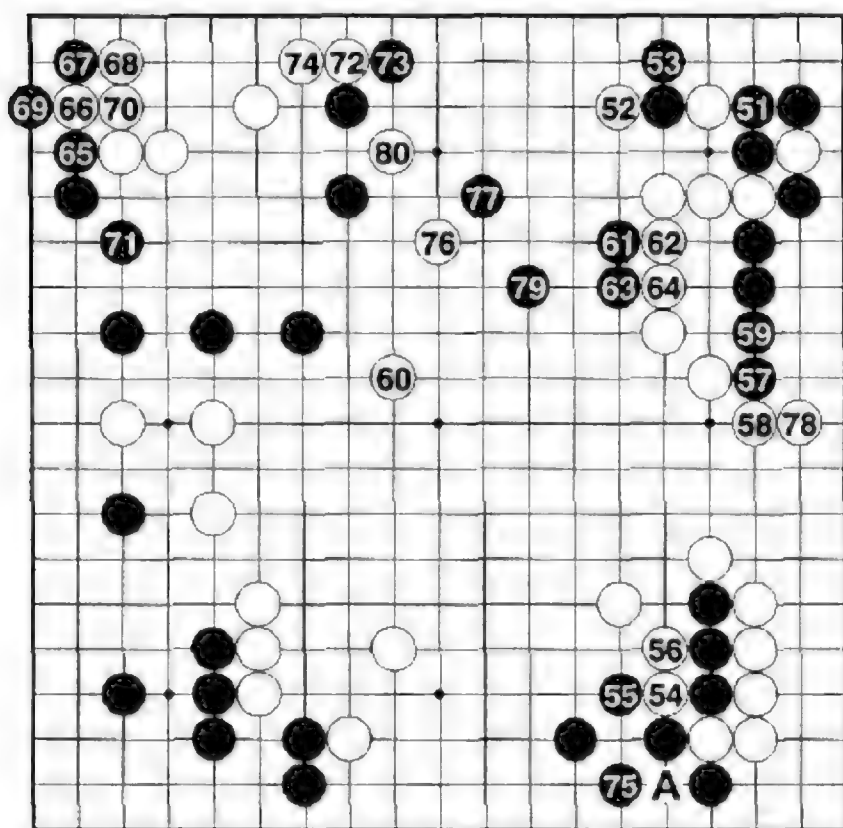
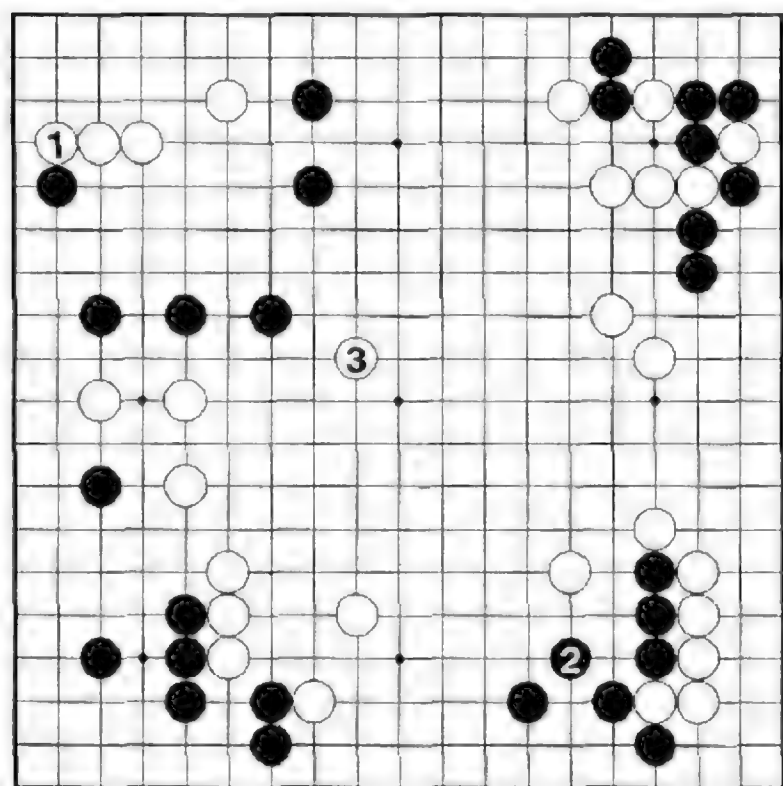


Figure 2 (51-80)



Dia. 4: a better strategy for White?

O: Looks good. White aims at looking after the centre while glaring at the top left black group. This is the sort of diagram you find in problem books. . . . It looks quite good for White.

Reporter: How do you assess the game after 56?

Komatsu: White's play was sub-optimal in the bottom left in the opening; Black's play in the bottom right was open to criticism.

O: White has just missed a perfect opportunity [with 54].

Kubo: On balance, I think it's a good contest.

Komatsu: Black finally goes through with his crawling move at 65. He stabilizes his own group with 65 and forces White to live with his group. White 72 and 74 can't be omitted. Having lost his ko threats against this group, Black defends with 75. It's all easy to understand.

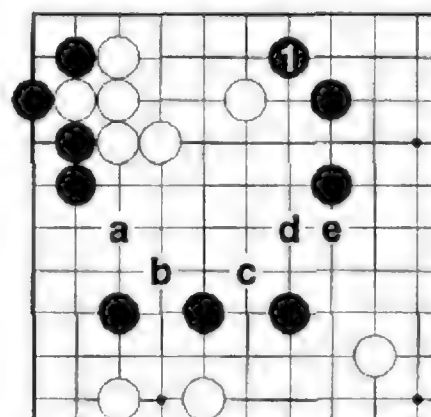
Reporter: I don't know about the professional viewpoint, but to amateur eyes it's a little unsatisfying.

O: You want to try to capture the group with 1 in *Dia. 5*?

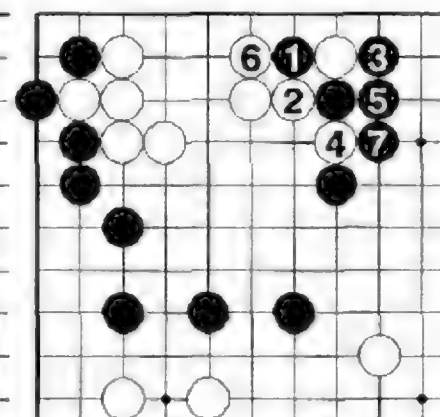
Reporter: Is it no good?

Kubo: There's no knowing what will come flying at you. White has forcing moves at 'a', 'b' and 'c', and Black is thin around 'd' and 'e'. If White saved his group and Black were left with defects in his shape, then it really would become impossible to win the ko in the bottom right.

Komatsu: Black looks like losing easily.



Dia. 5: risky?



Dia. 6: no gain

O: Maybe we should comment on Black 73. Playing 1 in *Dia. 6* doesn't gain anything. After 2 to 6, Black can't omit 7, so he ends in gote. White then starts the ko in the bottom right. How about it?

Reporter: I see. This hurts.

Komatsu: In the game, Black is left with a cutting point below 73, but the top is not so big.

O: How about 78?

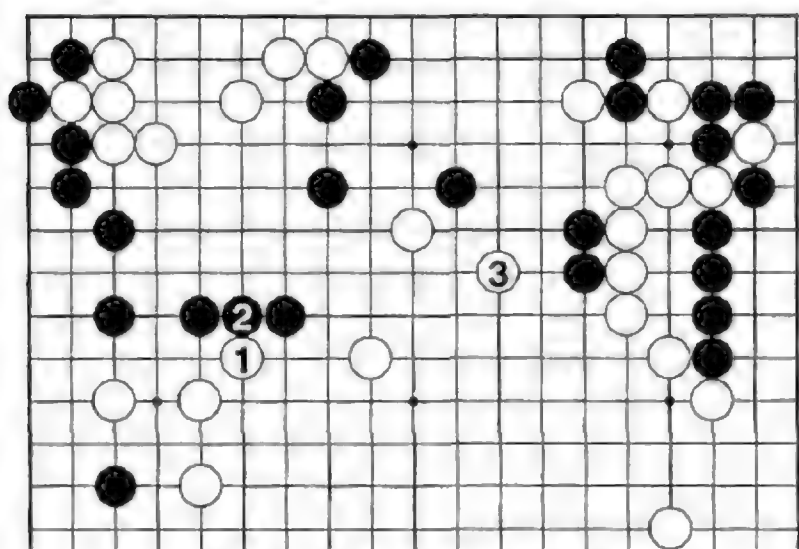
Komatsu: Right. Black is defending at 77 and 79. In other words, he's got a strong shape now. White's thin.

Kubo: Are you suggesting [White 78 at] 1 in *Dia. 7* (next page)? I'd be a little worried about whether Black would connect.

O: It's Yoda.

Komatsu: He would definitely answer at 2. If White then plays 3, the game is still a good contest. Failing to make this exchange was fatal.

O: Perhaps White could still have played the peep with 80 . . . H'm. It will be sente. After all, the connection is a splendid move in its own right.



Dia. 7: an important peep

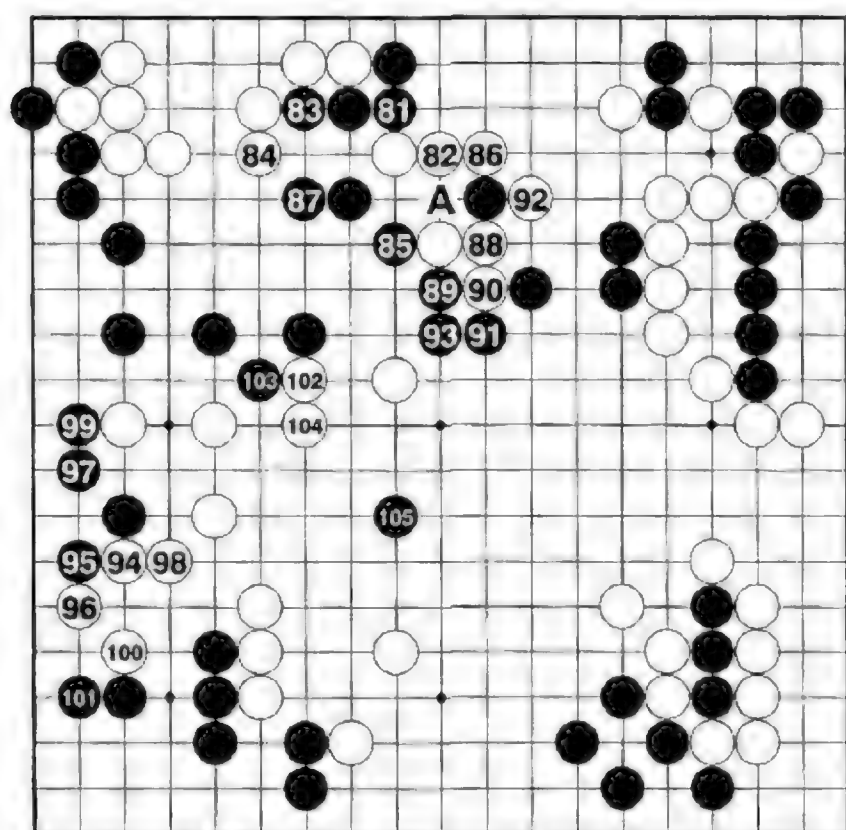
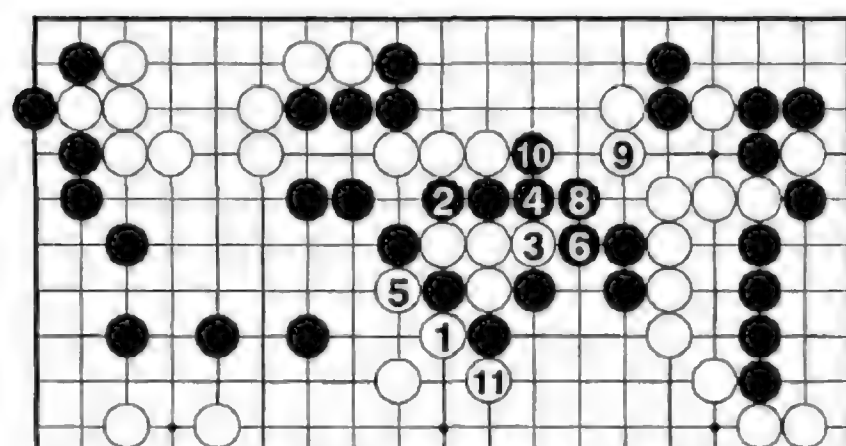


Figure 3 (81-105)



Dia. 8: recommended for 92 7: connects

Figure 3 (81-105). The deciding move

Komatsu: White seems to be doing well when he splits Black into two with 82, but Black 85 is a tesuji that's really the only move. White gets more and more thin as Black rampages through the centre up to 93.

Reporter: Black 85 is good style, is it?

Kubo: Docilely connecting at A with 86 gives White bad shape, an empty triangle.

Komatsu: I think that White has no choice but to follow *Dia. 8* with 92. Being squeezed is painful, but the atari of 11 makes very good

shape. This group also offers support to the bottom left white group.

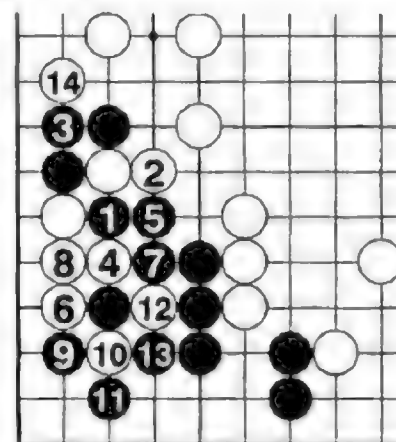
O: Right. Even so, Black may be satisfied, as he occupies the point of 10. At any rate, it's not bad for him.

Kubo: White 92 is painful; next, Black 93 is absolutely necessary. White's plan is to take sente and to reinforce his bottom left group, but his shape doesn't feel good.

Komatsu: White 94 and 96 show the quick footwork that is Cho's forte — at least, that's what I thought, but Yoda's counter is devastating.

O: Black 97 was clever. I was impressed.

Kubo: If Black plays 1 and 3 in *Dia. 9*, the bottom left is black territory. However, White extends his liberties with 4 to 12, and Black is only one move ahead in the capturing race. That means that White can squeeze, starting with 14, so he would have reinforced his bottom left group in sente.



Dia. 9: good for White

Komatsu: White has broken into the bottom left, but Black links up with 99, securing his group. As before, White's eye shape is thin. That shows how effective Black 97 was.

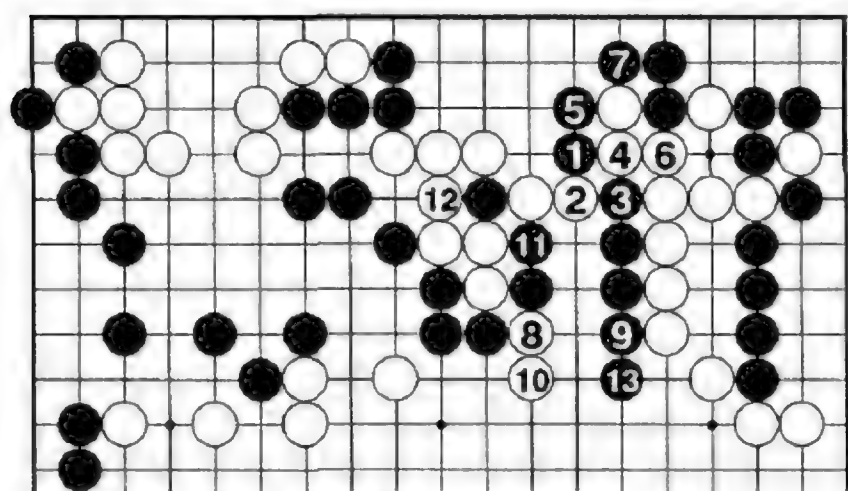
O: Black 105 in response to 102 and 104 is a terrific move. You could call it the deciding move.

Komatsu: White stones outnumber Black in the vicinity, but, as Kubo mentioned, the white group at the top feels quite bad. That's why Black can plunge in with 105.

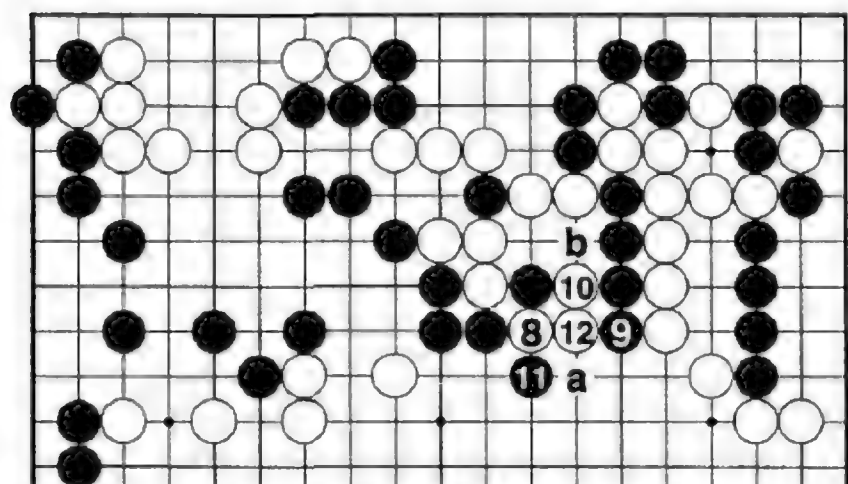
Kubo: If Black attacks with 1 in *Dia. 10*, White has no choice but to answer with 2 to 8. After Black 9, White really wants to extend at 10, but the black group can't be caught after 11 and 13. In other words, the white group at the top is captured.

Komatsu: If White answers 9 with 10 in *Dia. 11*, he's safe at this stage of the game: after 12, 'a' and 'b' are miai. But when White cuts at 8, he feels terribly uncomfortable. If black allies appear in the centre, the blunt atari of Black 11 at

12 may become possible. Yoda's 105 takes all this into account.



Dia. 10: White is captured



Dia. 11: safe, but bad aji

Reporter: Is using 102 to peep at 103 no good? If Black answers, it's sente.

Kubo: This time Black won't answer — because he's stored up strength with 87 and 99. If it were a little earlier . . .

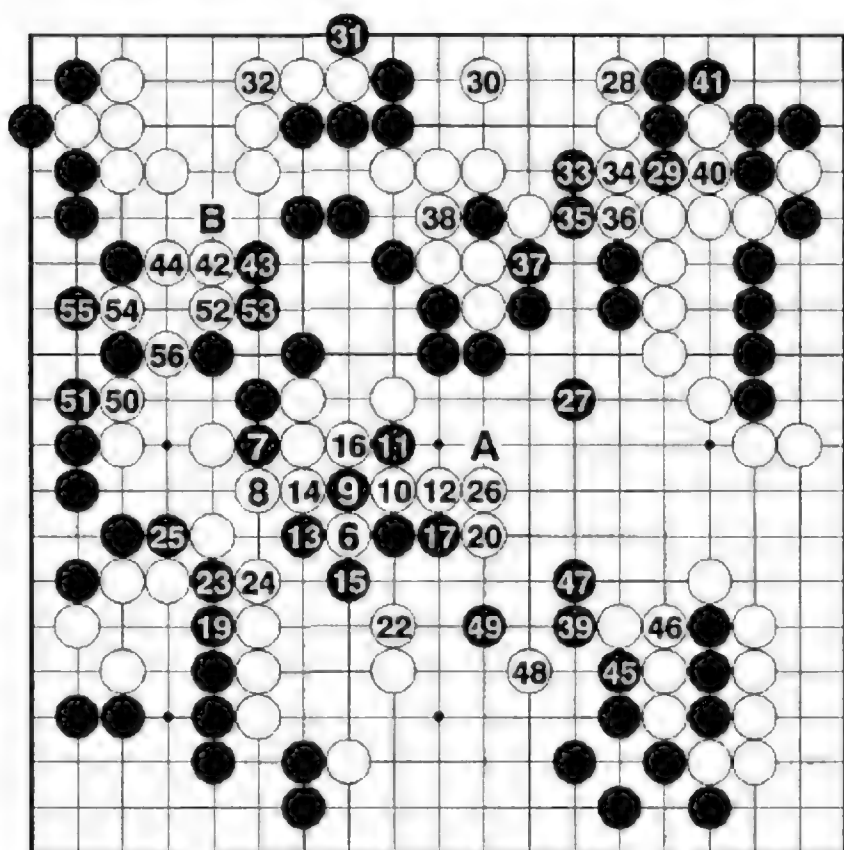


Figure 4 (106-156)

18: ko; 21: ko

Figure 4 (106-156). Yoda almost wraps up the game.

Reporter: Cho answers patiently with 6. He

doesn't want to give Black any sente moves in the centre.

O: Even so . . .

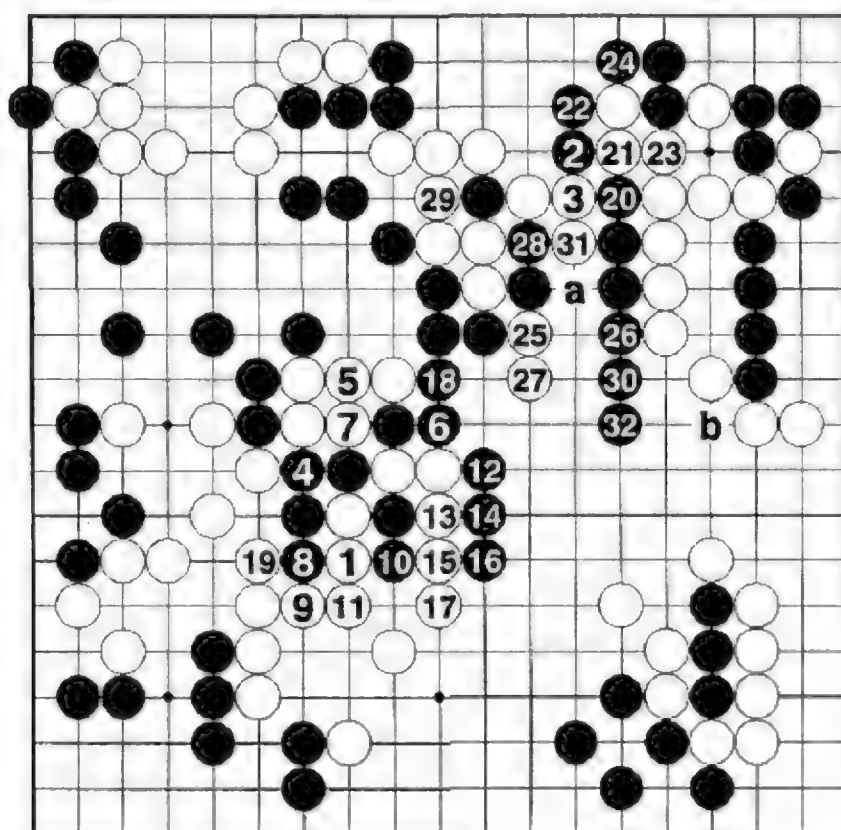
Komatsu: It's too painful. If this happened to me, I'd make a suicidal counterattack, for example, with White A. [But the game would end sooner.] White 6 is the most tenacious move.

Kubo: Actually, my feeling is that Black doesn't gain so much from the trade to 25.

Komatsu: Probably he could have attacked more severely. The only thing is that Yoda's judgement is that this gives Black a win. I agree with his assessment.

Reporter: I have a question. What happens if instead of 14 White pulls out his stone with 1 in *Dia. 12*?

O: Black makes use of his aji at the top. After exchanging 3 for 4, he plays the sente sequence up to 18, then switches to 20. After the moves to 31, Black 32 is the key move: it makes miai of 'a' and 'b'.



Dia. 12: Black wins

Kubo: There would be a great upset if Black used 32 to connect at 'a': White attaches at 32.

Komatsu: There's no way Black can fail to win the game — at least, that's what I'd like to say, but Cho's unbelievably patient play comes within an ace of paying dividends. The blame lies with Black 39.

O: This is small.

Kubo: I can't believe that White has any effective way of enclosing this area.

Reporter: Does that mean that White 42 was bigger?

Komatsu: Right. Just after this, Cho sets up one of the kos he's so good at, and Black is split

into two. The top black group is starting to look quite uncomfortable.

Kubo: Instead of 39, the biggest move was Black B.

Komatsu: This is big — bigger than it looks. Black secures centre territory while linking up. White's group also has to worry about its eye shape.

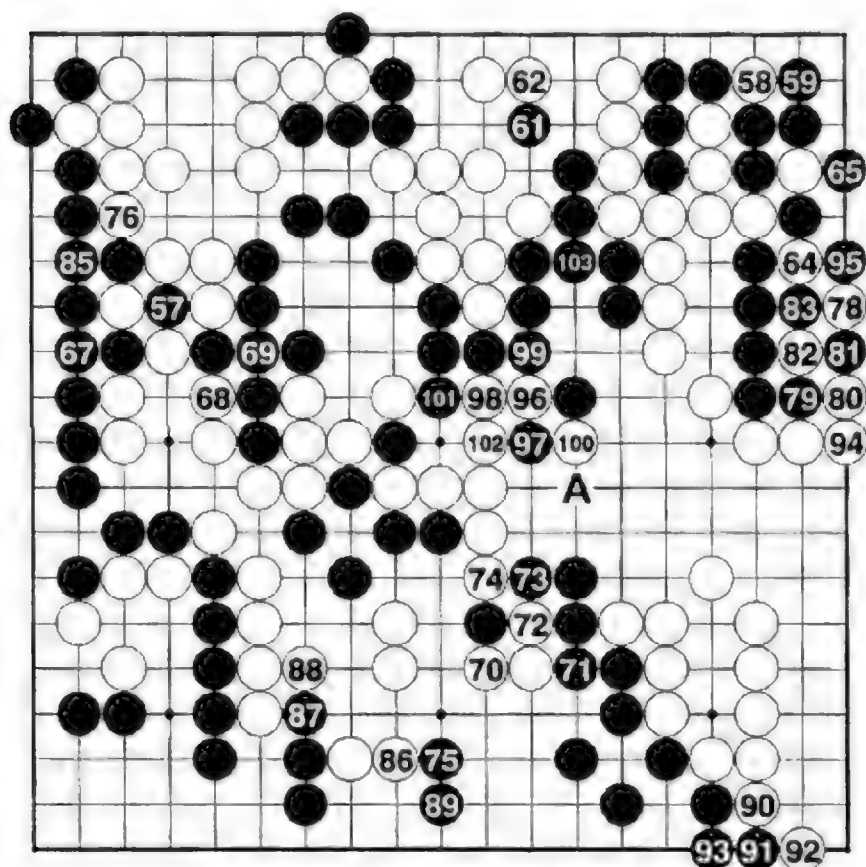


Figure 5 (157-203)
ko: 60, 63, 66, 77, 84

Figure 5 (157-203). Yoda holds on to his lead.

Komatsu: Black can't fight this ko. He would suffer an upset if White captured at 67 or at 85. White takes some profit during the ko fight, as well.

Kubo: At this stage, Black can only connect at 71 in response to White 70. When he played 49 in the previous figure Yoda must have been thinking of the variation of Black 71 at 74, White 71, Black A. He lost this, too.

O: You could hardly play this variation in the middle of a ko fight.

Komatsu: The only thing is that it stopped short of causing an upset. When White attacks with 96, Black gets exactly two eyes up to 103, and White resigns. [Black 103 is sente, as it threatens to cut off the centre top white group.] Black is 12 or 13 points ahead on the board.

White resigns after Black 203.

(Monthly Go World, August 2004.)



Game Six: Another half-pointer

White: Yoda Norimoto

Black: Cho U

Played in Furumaki Hot Spring, Misawa City, Aomori Prefecture on 8 & 9 July 2004.

Commentary by Cho U. Report by Amatake Jun-ji.

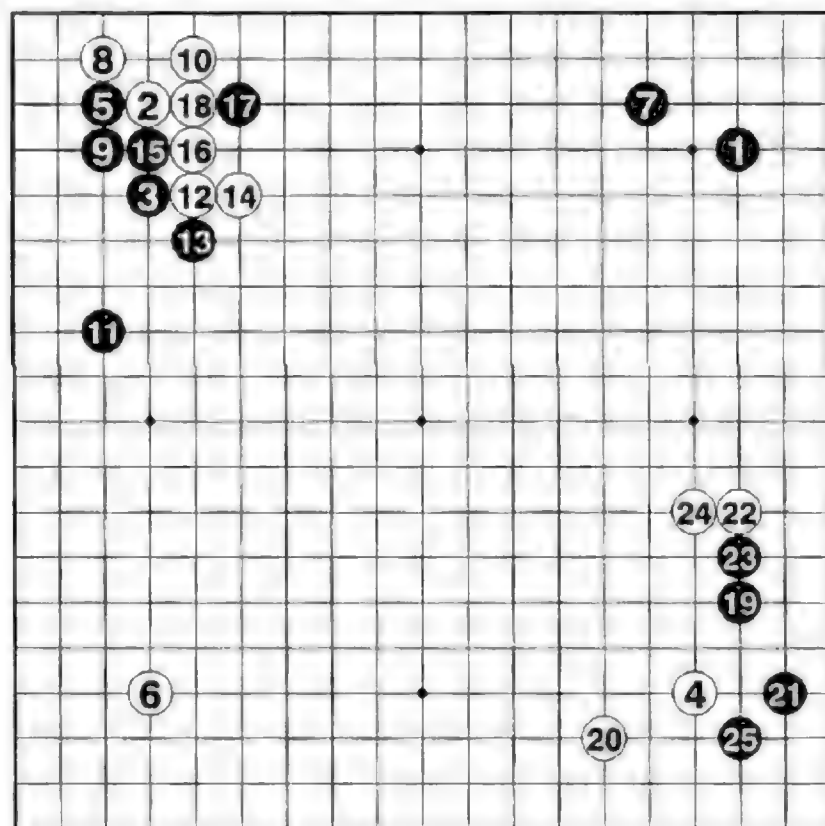
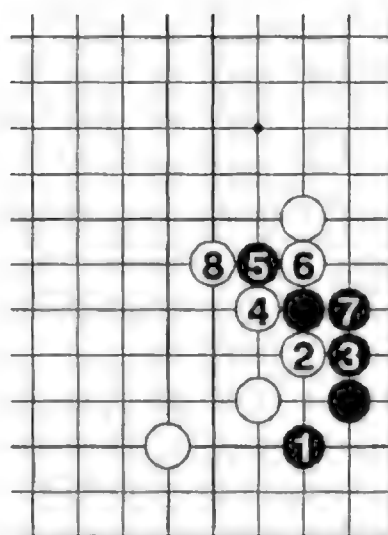
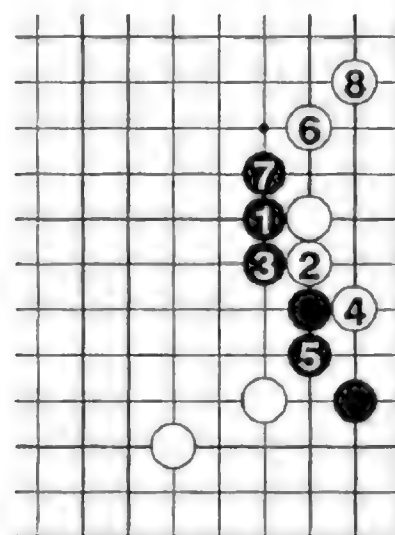


Figure 1 (1-25)



Dia. 1: good for White



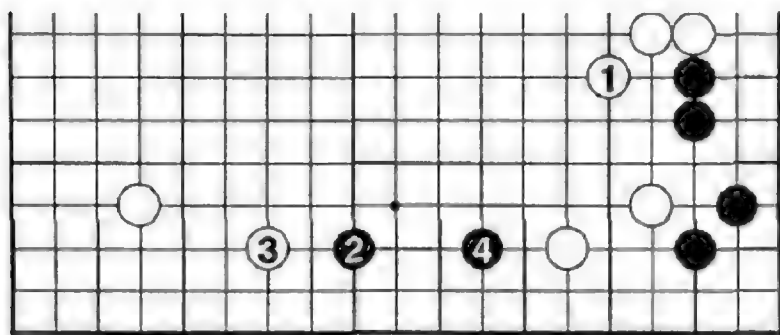
Dia. 2: slack?

Figure 1 (1-25). The 3-3 point is big.

White 12 is natural when Black makes the narrow extension of 11. The only thing is that, even though White builds thickness, from my point of view Black 7 erases that thickness.

White 20. If White plays the pincer of 22 immediately, Black will invade at the 3-3 point, which is big in this position. That's why White plays 20 before making the pincer. If Black plays 23 at 1 in Dia. 1, White counters with 2 to 8; Black doesn't have a suitable ladder breaker, so he is dissatisfied. If instead Black played 1 in Dia. 2, I was worried about the prospect of

White 2 and 4. This looks slack territorially for Black.



Dia. 3: good for Black

While thinking about one thing or another, I felt tempted to ram into White with 23. Locally, it's a bad move, but Black gets to occupy the 'large 3-3' of 25, so I thought that this gave a reasonable game. Black is not happy to have provoked White 24, but if White immediately blocks his way out with 1 in *Dia. 3*, Black 2 is just right. This looks slack for White.

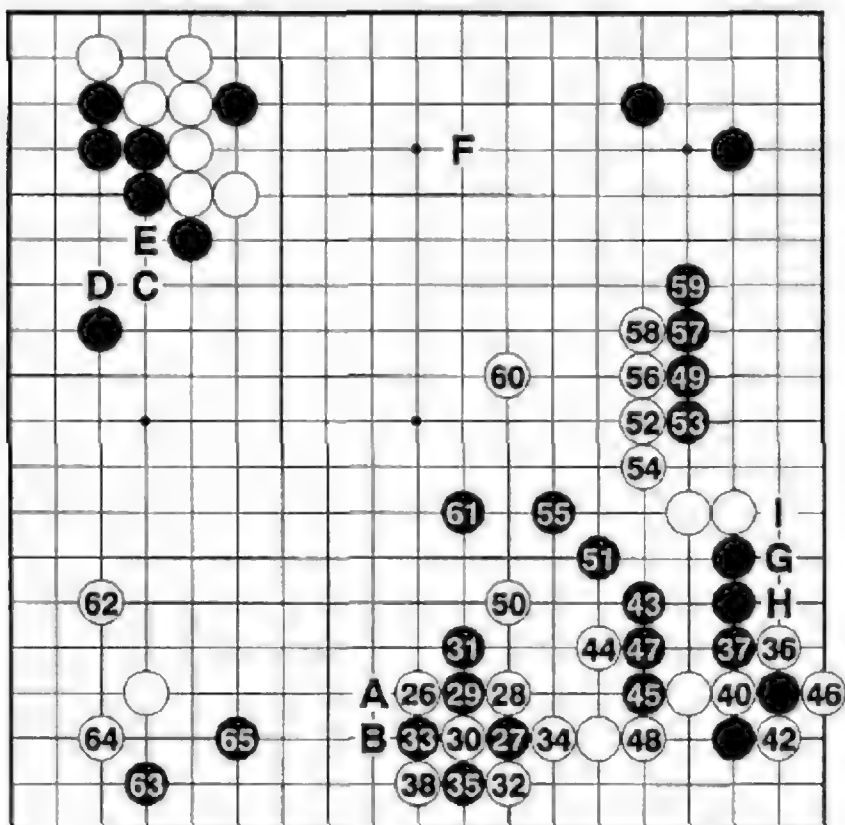
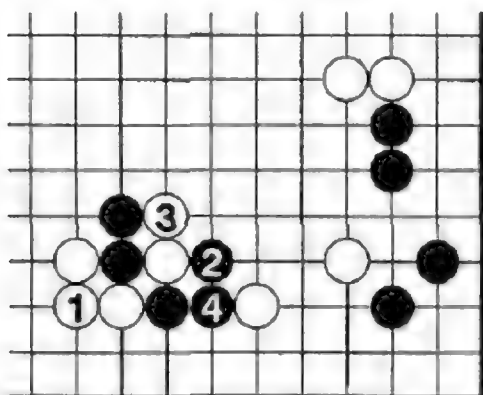


Figure 2 (26-65)
39: ko; 41: connects



Dia. 4: good for Black

Figure 2 (26-65). An even trade

I expected either White 26 or A. White 26 at 30 seemed unlikely, the reason being that when White does make the diagonal move at 1 in *Dia.*

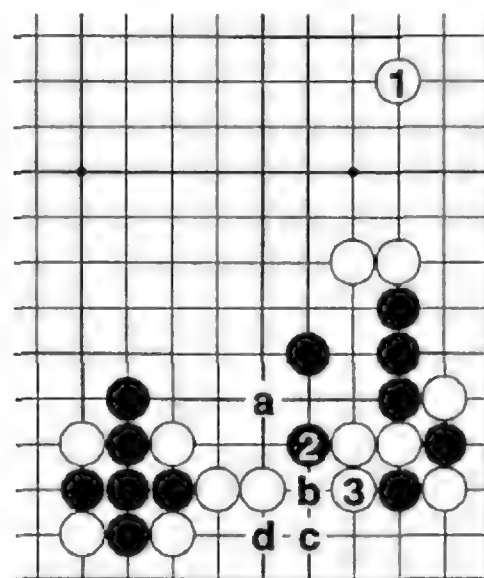
3 his position is too narrow, so he is less than thrilled.

When Black invades at 27, the continuation to 35 is more or less a one-way street. If White plays 32 at 1 in *Dia. 4*, Black gets a big corner after 2 and 4.

White 36 and 38 were played quickly, showing a decisiveness typical of Yoda Sensei. White 38 at B is also possible and simply playing 36 at B also looks possible. Yet another possibility is to exchange White C for Black D, creating the ko threat of E, then to atari at B...

Yoda Sensei doesn't agonize very much over his moves. Even though Black ended the ko with 41, he presumably considered the successive moves of 40 and 42 good enough for White. This is the simplest strategy.

For my part, though being cut with 40 and 42 may make awful shape for Black, the bottom is also pretty terrible for White from the point of view of *tewari*, so I thought the trade was pretty even.



Dia. 5: Black's forcing moves

Apparently the opinion was expressed that White should hasten to extend to 1 in *Dia. 5* in response to Black 43, but White probably disliked the prospect of Black's forcing move at 2. The strong point for Black in this shape is that moves around 'a' will be sente, threatening Black 'b'—White 'c'—Black 'd'.

White 46. Capturing a stone is the strongest move, as it offers support to the two white stones above on the side.

When Black pincers at 49, White moves out with 52 to 60 and is confident this group won't come under severe attack.

Black 63. Extending to F, glaring at the white group on the right side, would also be a good point, but I didn't want the game to develop in such a way that I attacked this group. In the process of rescuing it, White might play G—

Black H-White I, which causes Black to lose points. Anyway, I didn't think the game was bad for me.

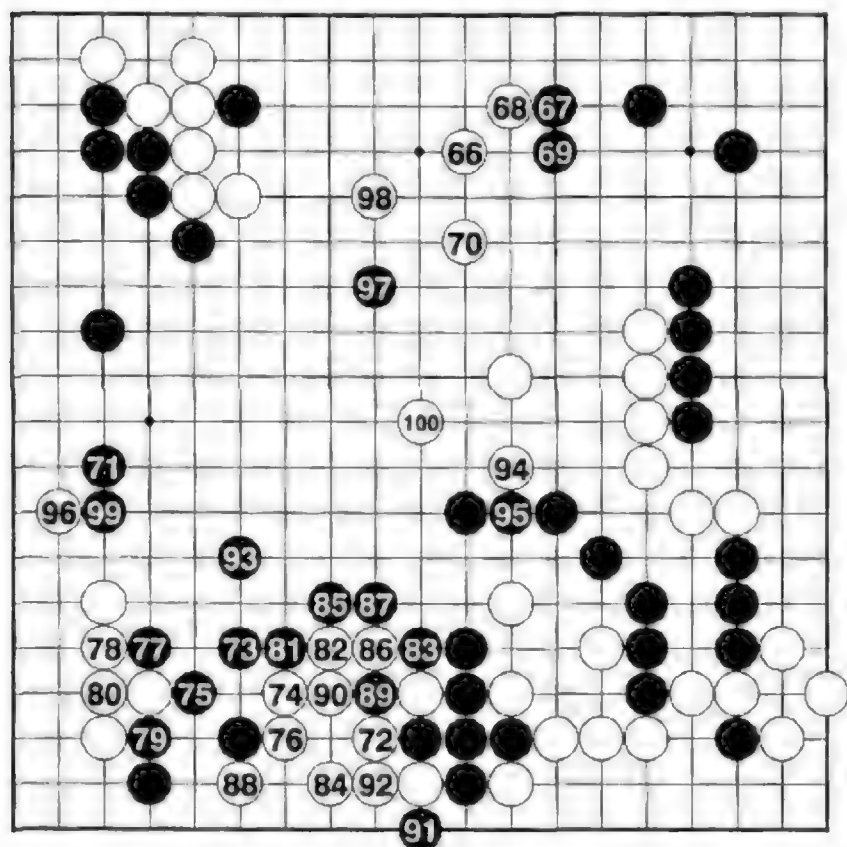
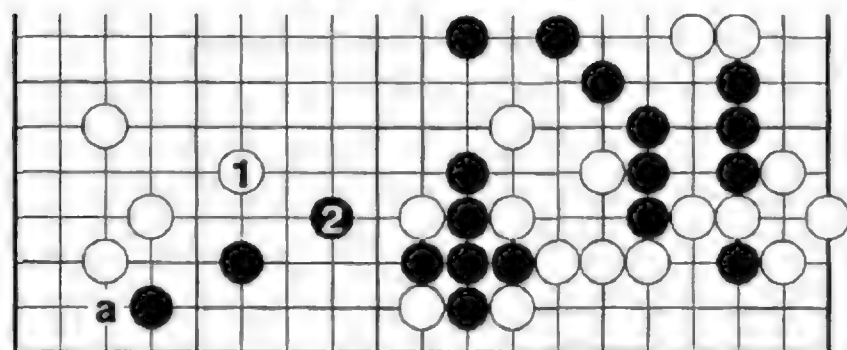


Figure 3 (66-100)



Dia. 6: what I had expected

Figure 3 (66-100). Taken by surprise

White 72 astonished me. Yoda Sensei had been aiming at this move for quite a while, of course. My calculation had been that if White played 1 in Dia. 6, Black 2 would be good enough, while if White 'a' I could jump to Black 1. If I had known that White had such a strong move, perhaps I could have made an all-out extension with 71 at 99 to hold White in check.

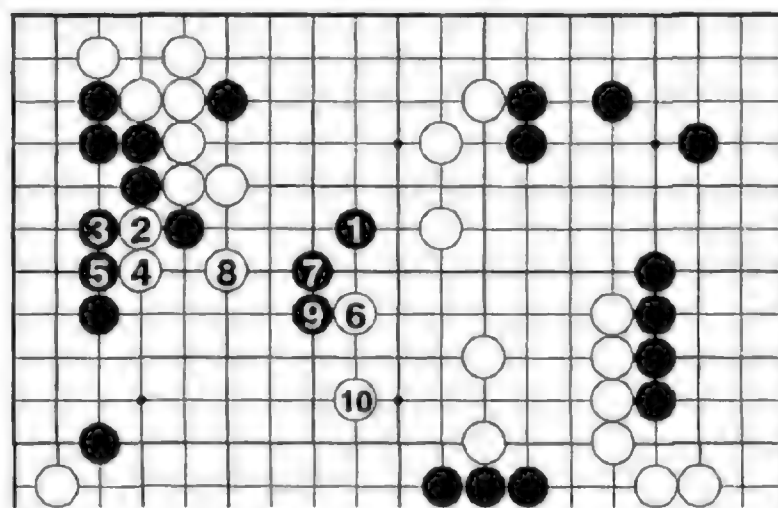
White completely hollows out my bottom area with 74 and 76. I don't want to force with 77 and 79, but if I simply push along with 77 at 81, a white hane at 88 will give me a jolt.

Black 83. If at 85, White 87 will be troublesome. If White plays 84 at 85, Black 84 will be severe. The sequence to 93 is probably a one-way street. At this stage, I had revised my positional judgement from 'shouldn't be bad for me' to 'a close game or perhaps a little tough for me'. The reason is that I hadn't played any really awful moves.

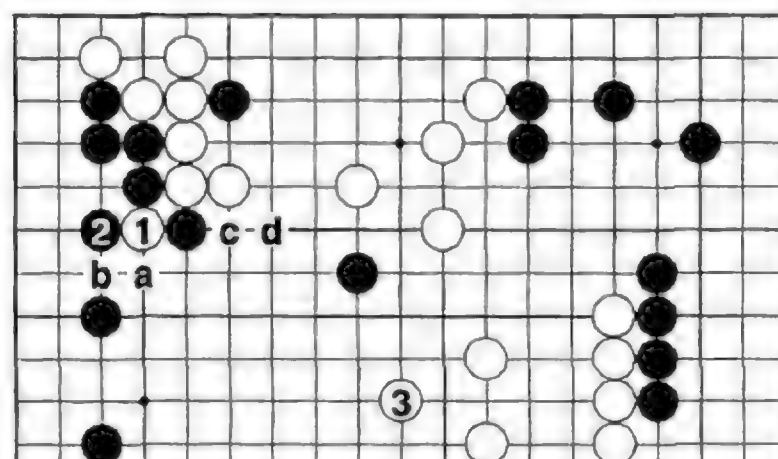
Reducing with Black 97 looks like par for the course. If Black plunges in at 1 in Dia. 7, then

White 2 and 4, followed by capping at 6, will be frightening; if the moves to 10 follow, Black becomes thin in the centre.

There was a theory that before playing 100 White should have cut at 1 in Dia. 8. The idea is that, assuming White 'a' and Black 'b', Black can't push up at 'c', because White has 'd'. The only thing is that it's possible the 1-2 exchange could become a bad move for White, so I think it's hard to say for sure. There is the problem that in the game Black 5 in the next figure becomes the only move...



Dia. 7: too deep



Dia. 8: better for White?

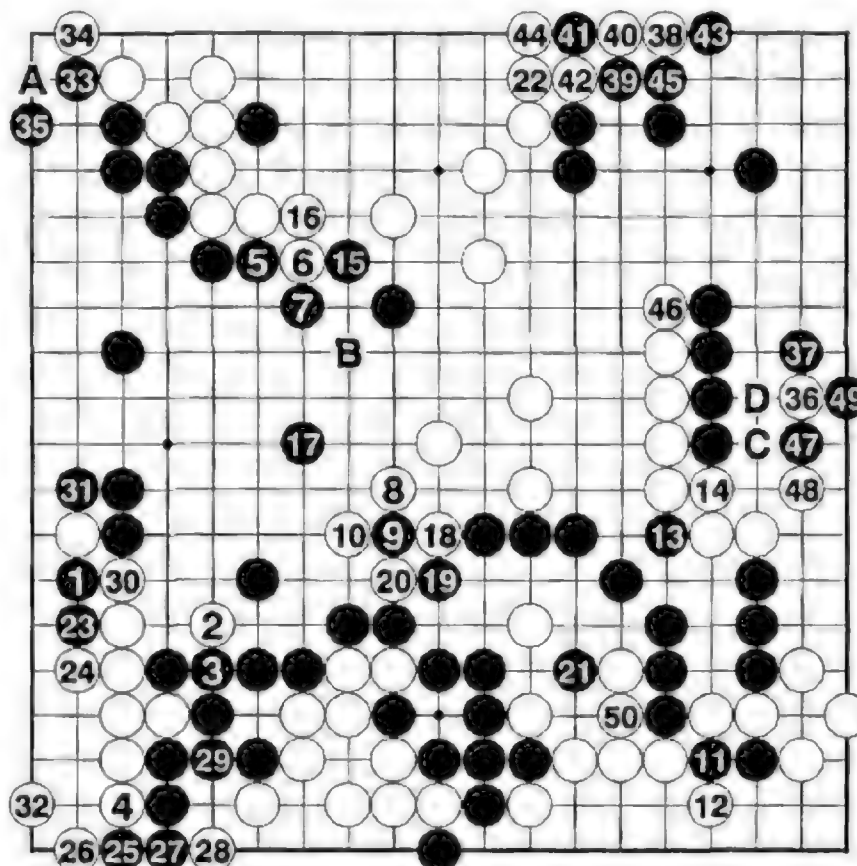
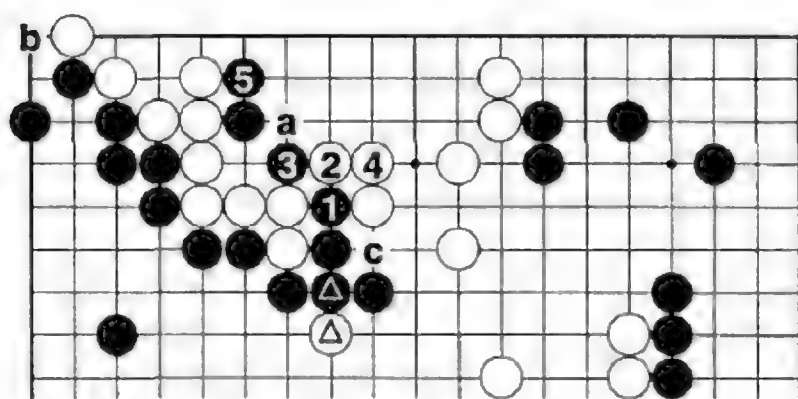


Figure 4 (101-150)



Dia. 9: trouble for White

Figure 4 (101–150). A painstaking move

Someone expressed the opinion that White should reduce at 17 instead of 10. It's certainly true that taking sente with 13 and switching to 17 is big. Perhaps White's play around this point is too simple.

The forcing moves of 18 and 20 show a decisiveness typical of Yoda. The exchange for 21 may seem wasteful, but he probably considers this par for the course, as he wants to switch to the large endgame move of 22.

The diagonal connection of 35 was a painstaking move. The descent at A is, in one sense, worth one point more, but there is a gain for Black in that White can no longer peep at B. When the exchange of the marked stones in *Dia. 9* is in place, Black can play 1 to 5; if next White 'a', Black plays 'b'. Without the marked stones, White can atari at 'c' after Black 3, so this sequence doesn't work.

I felt that I would be able to make up the one-point loss caused by 35.

After a difficult middle game, a super difficult endgame was waiting. I've said in interviews that I like the endgame, but in this game each move was very difficult, and I didn't know what was best.

White 46. It's very hard to say whether this or White C–Black D–White 47–Black 46 is more profitable. At the time, I felt that Black was a little ahead. I thought it would be difficult for White to convert the centre into territory.

Figure 5 (151–200). Too close to call

The atari of Black 75 was dubious. I should have played at 1 in *Dia. 10*. This is straightforward. After 2 to 9, the position seems to favour Black by a 'thick half point' [that is, a half-point lead that is unlikely to be overturned].

Throwing in a cut at 76 before answering at 78 is shrewd. I was upset when I saw this move. Black has clearly suffered a loss compared to 1 in *Dia. 10*. That's why after 78 I didn't feel like capturing with Black 92.

White A was suggested instead of White 94. The endgame of this game is difficult, and I still haven't reached a conclusion about what happens if White does play A.

I heard that someone said that Black B was correct instead of 95, but during the game I was satisfied with playing up to 1 in the next figure in sente.

At this point, I imagined that it would be a half-pointer. But after this the endgame gets even more difficult.

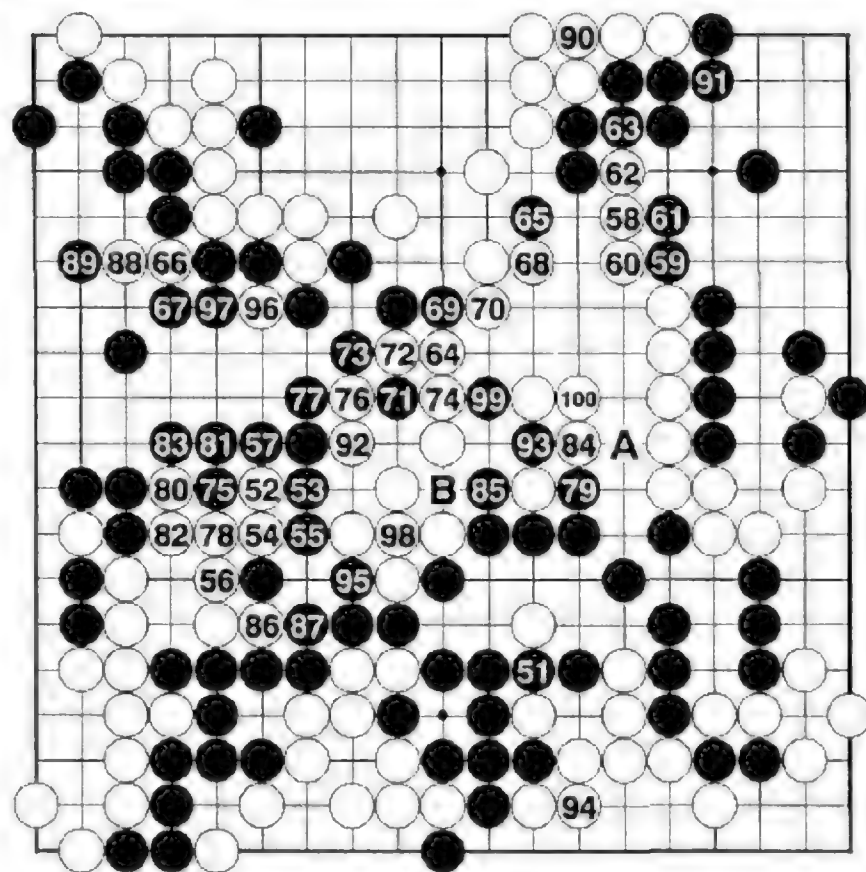
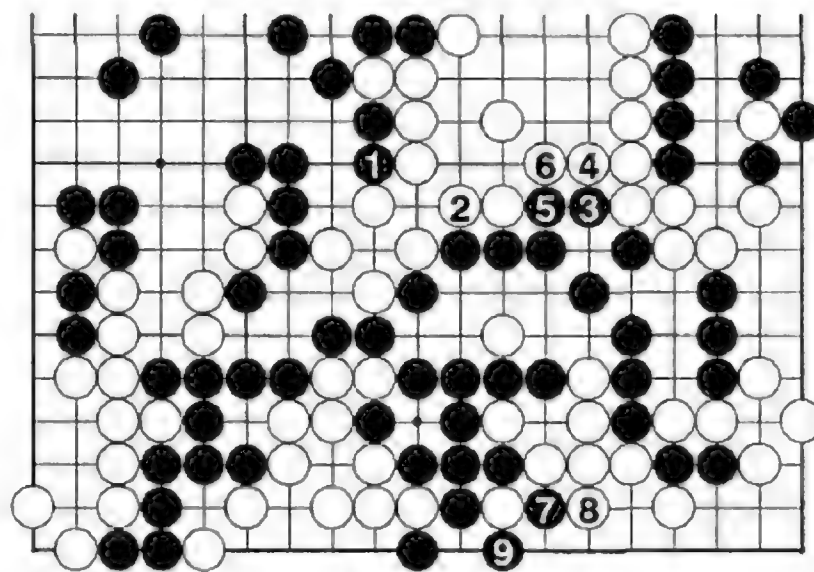


Figure 5 (151–200)



Dia. 10: better for Black 75



Just half a point . . .

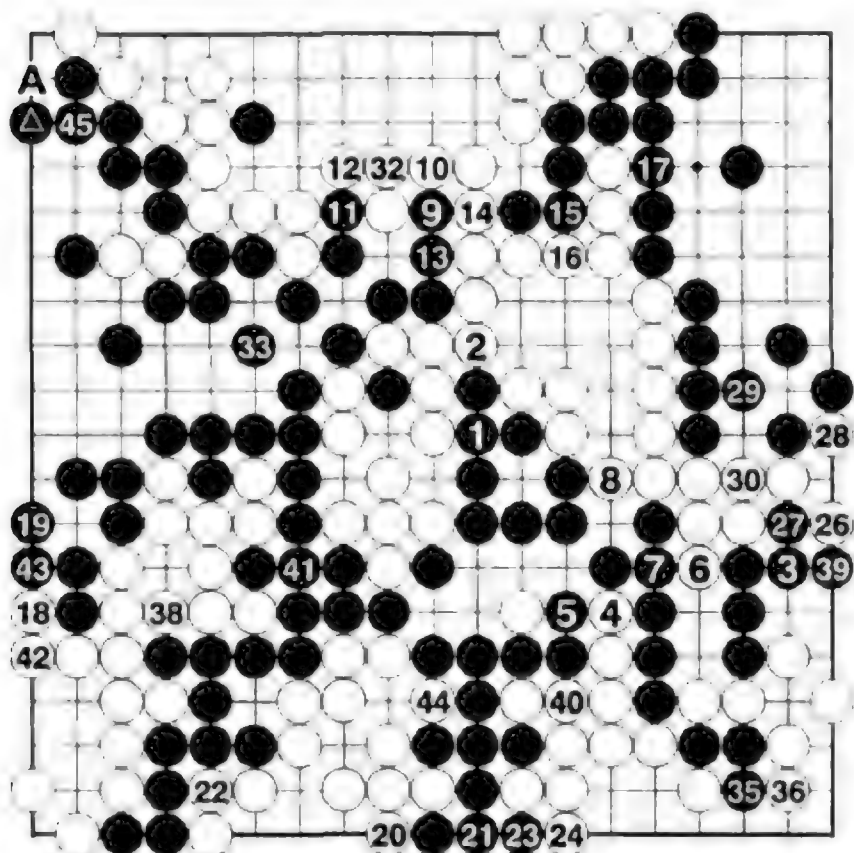
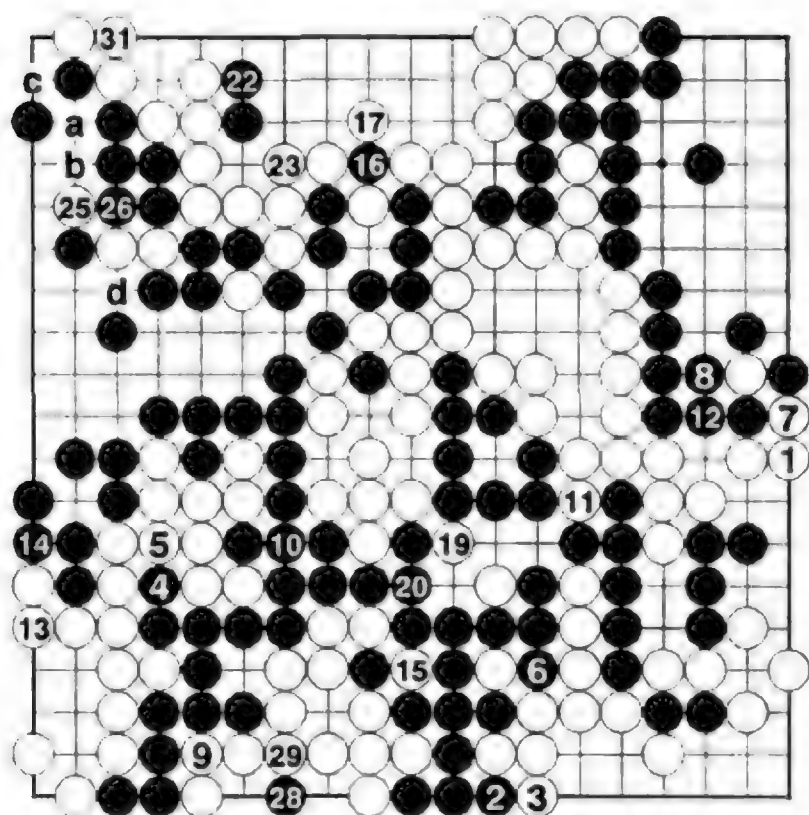


Figure 6 (201-246)

31: ko (at 25); 34: ko (at 28); 37: ko (at 25);
46: connects (left of 44)



Dia. 11: a win for White
ko (over 15): 18, 21, 24, 27, 30

Figure 6 (201-246). Decided by luck

White 22 was the losing move. I challenged White to a ko with 25; when I captured with 39, my half-point win became inevitable.

Instead of 22, it seems that White should have descended at 1 in *Dia. 11*. I say 'it seems', because I was told of this variation over the phone by Kono Rin 7-dan, who did the newspaper commentary on the game. The sequence is very long, but I hope you will accompany me as I go through it.

After the moves to 14 in the diagram, the half-point ko at 15 decides the outcome. In other words, the side that wins the ko wins the game

by half a point. Apparently, White 25 is an interesting move. If Black cuts at 26, White is ready with the connection of 31. If Black answers at 'a', White captures the ko and has one more ko threat than Black. If instead Black connects the half-point ko, White starts another ko with White 'a'—Black 'b'—White 'c' and wins. If, out of distaste for this, Black ataries at 'd' instead of 26, White fights the half-point ko in the usual way and wins, as he has one more threat than Black.

The endgame of this game was difficult: there were complicated variations like this lurking underneath the surface.

If the marked stone in the top left in the figure were at A, then I would have had one point extra when I connected at 45. This is the one-point loss I referred to earlier.

I was very lucky to win half-pointers in both the opening and closing games of the series. I have a number of big games coming up, including international ones, so I hope to make use of the experience of this match and do my best.

Black wins by half a point.

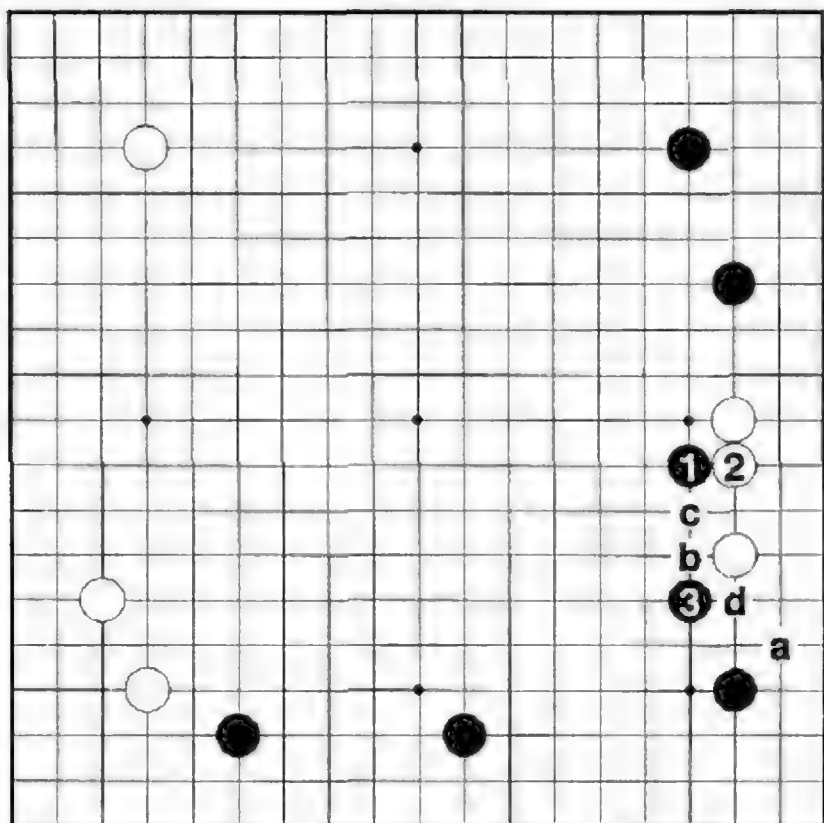
(*Monthly Go World*, September 2004. Honinbo report translated by John Power.)



*Planning a new Honinbo dynasty?
Cho is seen contemplating the future
the morning after his triumph.*

The Korean Style: Korean Joseki Innovations (7)

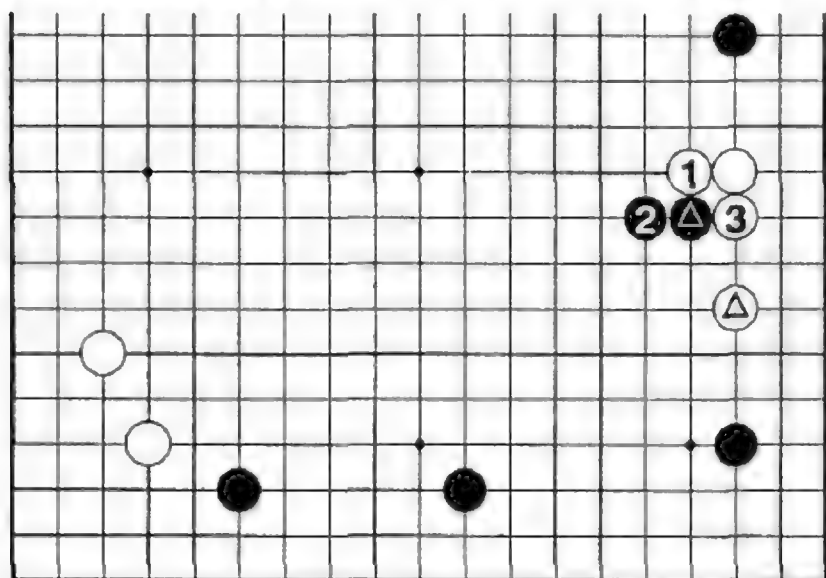
by Oya Koichi 9-dan



Dia. 1: countering the Yoda style

Dia. 1. Black 1 and 3 are a strategy for preempting the Yoda style of White 'a'. If White is kind enough to slide to 'a', Black plays 'b' and gets a good result, as we mentioned in the previous issue. If instead of 'a' White plays at 'c', Black's strong point is that he can treat Black 1 as light and block at 'd'.

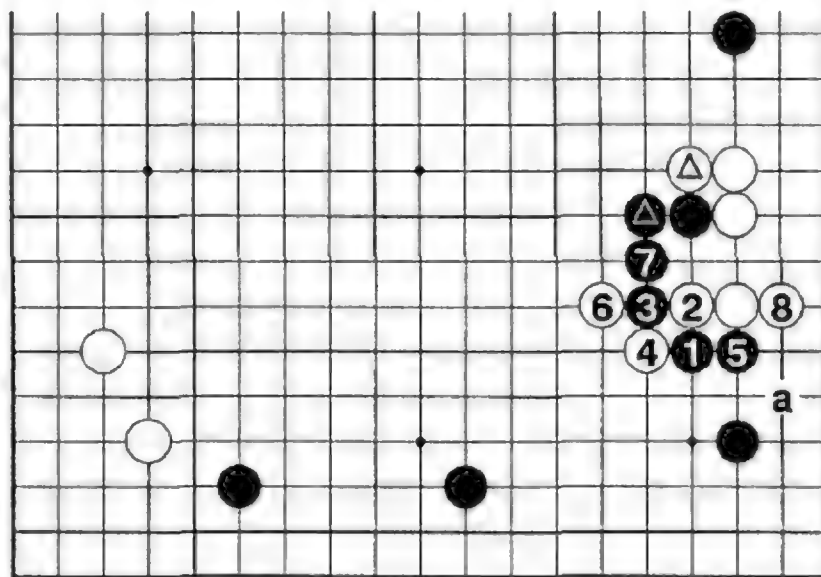
In this instalment, we would like to look at White's counters.



Dia. 2: the inimitable Korean style

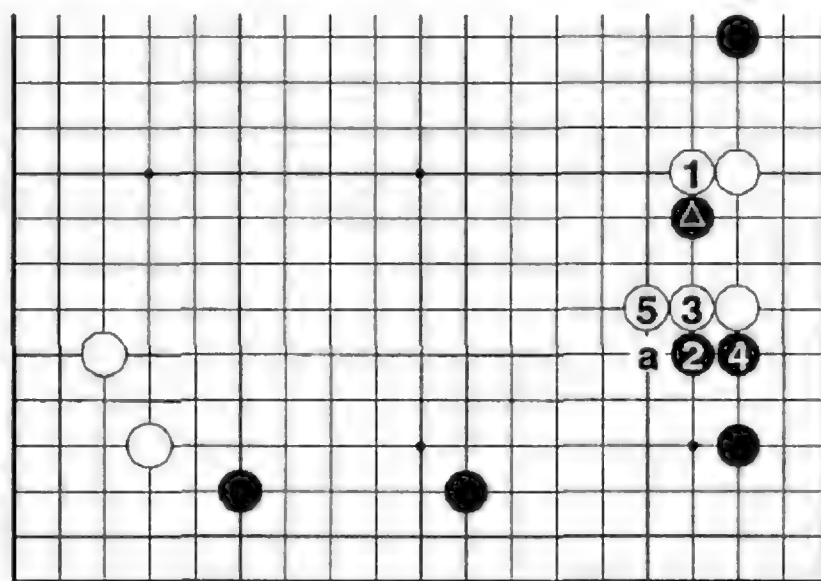
Dia. 2. White has just made a two-space extension with the marked stone, whereupon Black has made a shoulder hit with his marked stone. Usually White would be satisfied to defend at 3. The counter of White 1 is inconceivable in Japan. It's a strategy that only Koreans could come up with.

If Black pulls back at 2, White plays 3, satisfied with having made Black heavy. This is more efficient for White than simply playing 1 at 3.



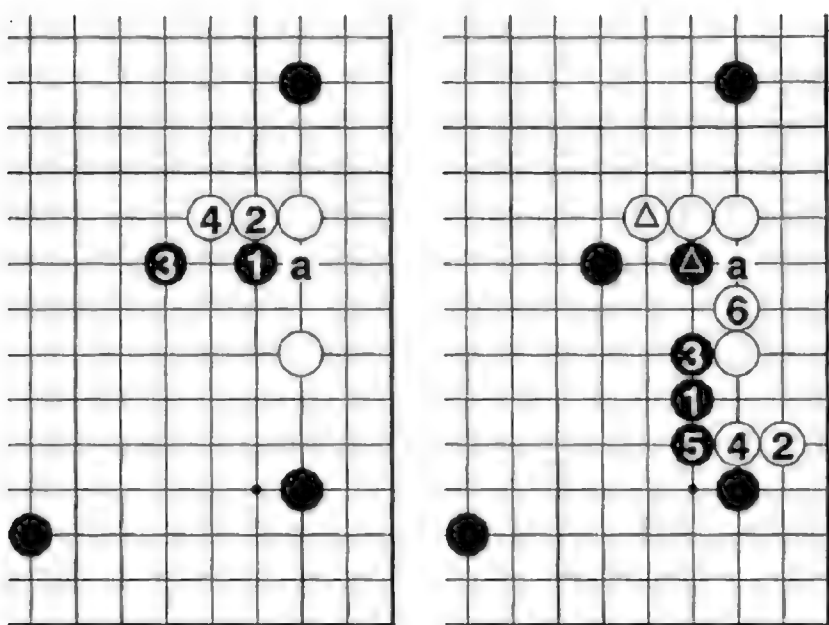
Dia. 3: ruining Black's shape

Dia. 3. White is not afraid of the pressing move at 1. As before, White can't slide at 'a', but he has the fierce counter of 2 and 4. Black's shape crumbles when White raps him on the head with 6. The exchange of the marked stones has made Black heavy.



Dia. 4: good for White

Dia. 4. In that case, what if Black ignores White 1 and presses at 2, following his original plan? Playing 3 and 5 looks good enough for White. The supposed black forcing move (the marked stone) looks like being swallowed up on a large scale. A stone played on top must be answered by a stone underneath for the former to be a forcing move. Even if Black secures territory at the bottom by pushing up with 'a' next, this result should be good for White.



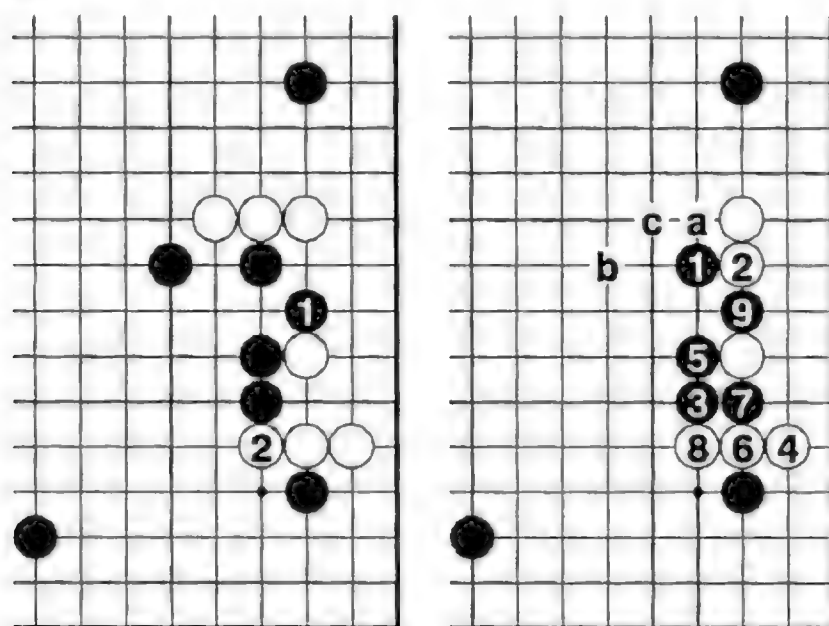
Dia. 5: a Korean counter Dia. 6: sliding is good

Dia. 5. In Korea, there are many examples of Black countering White 2 by jumping to 3. The aim, of course, is to stop Black 1 from becoming heavy. White 4 next is the only move. White 4 at 'a' would be just what Black wants — Black 1 would have become light.

Dia. 6. There's another beneficial effect from the marked white stone. If Black 1, the Yoda-style slide of 2 works well. Up to 6, White gets an efficient shape — because he hasn't ended up answering the marked black stone at 'a'.

There's a natural query here: what if instead of 5 Black uses brute force to split White?

Dia. 7. Black 1 is certainly a forceful move. White has no choice but to move out with 3. To tell the truth, Black has been bested in this exchange.



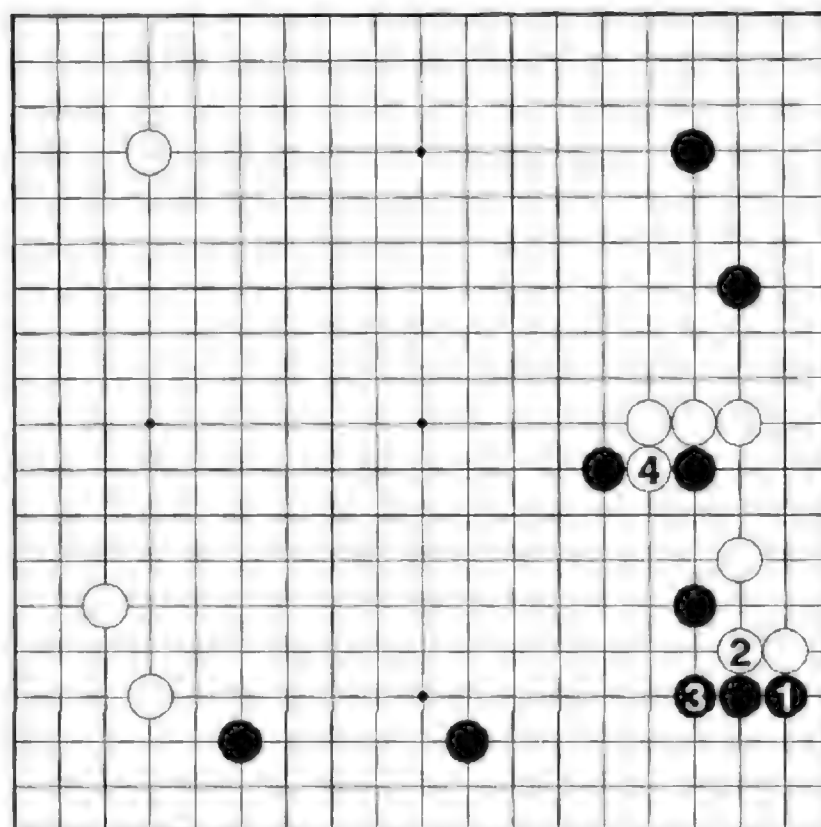
Dia. 7: a bad trade

Dia. 8: bad for White

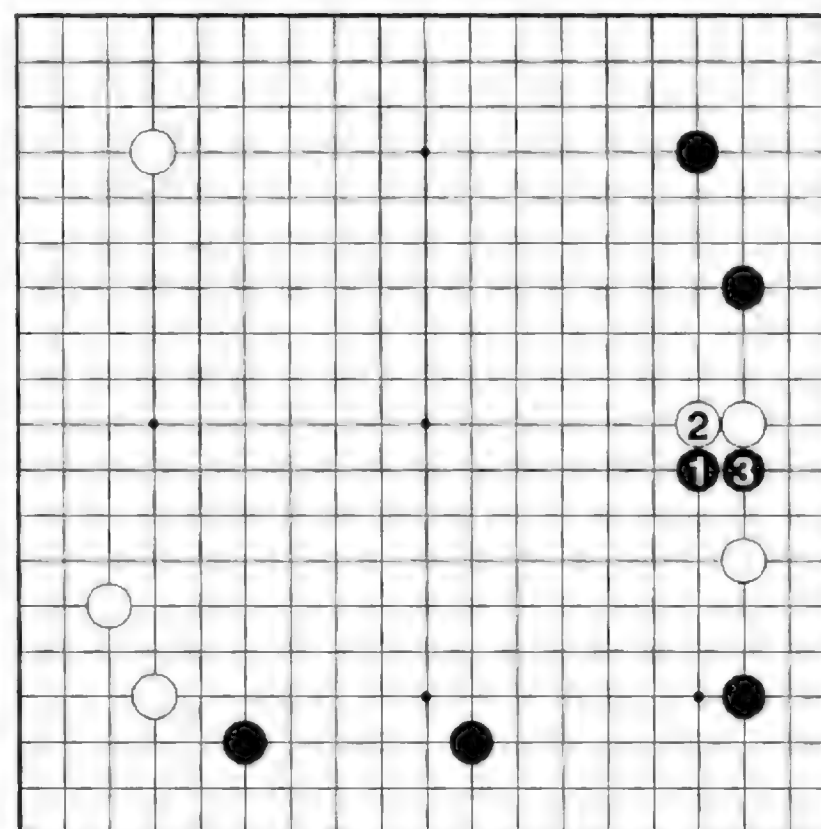
Dia. 8. We gave this variation before [Dia. 28, page 64, GW102]. When White answers Black 1 at 2, Black 7 and 9 are just right. In Dia. 7, White 2 is at 'a' and the Black 'b'–White 'c' exchange has also been made, so of course this is good for White.

Dia. 9. The conclusion is that Black has no choice but to block at 1. The general opinion

would probably be that White is thick in this result. But the Koreans go beyond this.



Dia. 9: White is thick



Dia. 10: the Korean style

Dia. 10. When Black blocks at 3, you fancy you can hear Godzilla roaring. What on earth is Black up to? If an amateur played this in a go club, he'd be laughed at.

But in Korea they thoroughly explore all the possibilities. We should learn from this approach.

Please think about the possible counters to Black 3. We will discuss them in our next instalment.

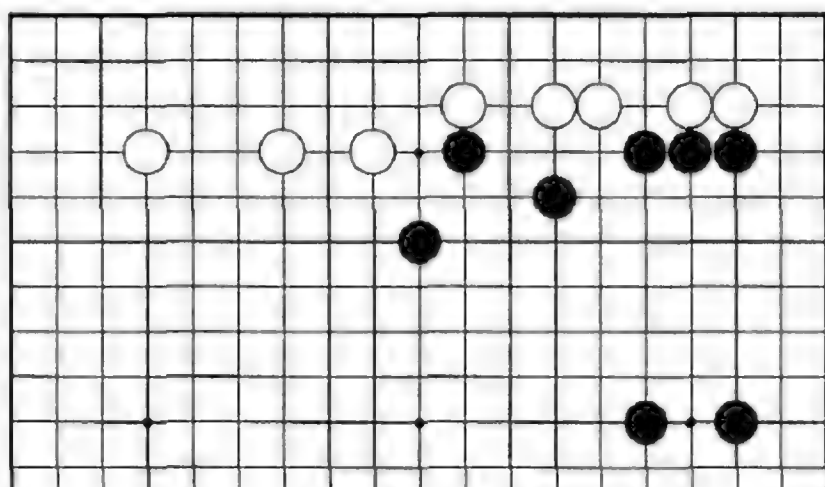
(Kido, January 1999. Translated by John Power.)

Clever Moves, Stylish Tesujis

by Kojima Takaho 9-dan

The problems below are taken from a long-running series in *Go Weekly*. Kojima 9-dan presents problems based on positions in amateur and professional games and involving standard tesujis. Although we say 'standard', the execution is sometimes quite difficult. It's safe to say that only high-level dan players would get these problems right in actual play, one reason being that you have to be quite strong to realize that there is a problem to be solved. When specifically presented as problems, however, as here, they should be a little easier.

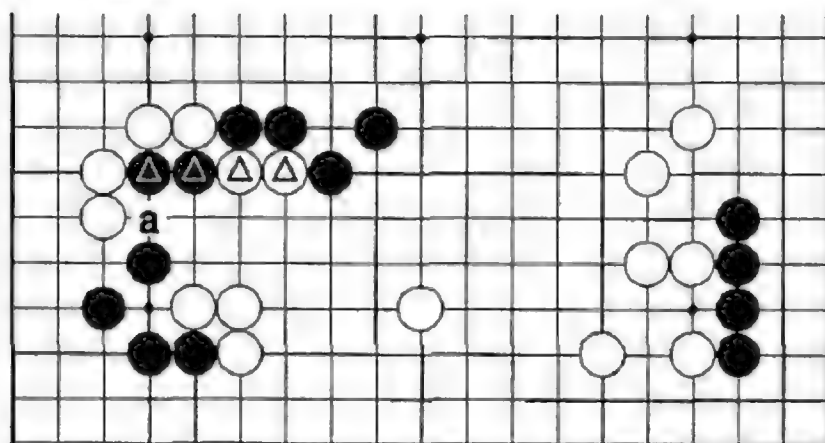
Problem 1



Black to play

White's shape at the top is obviously a little thin, but Black's is not so strong either. How can he inflict damage on White without being hurt himself?

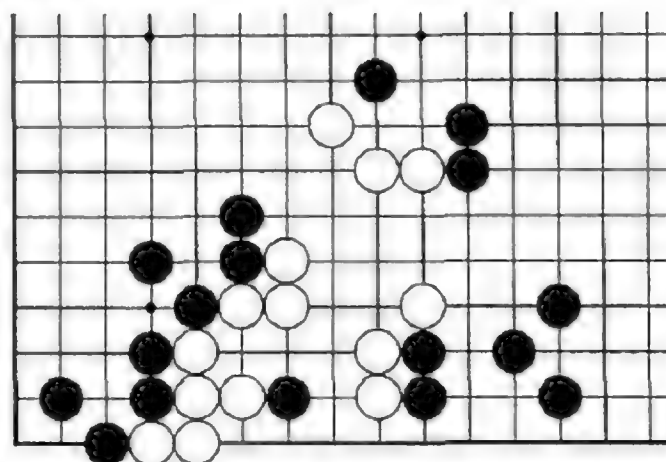
Problem 2



Black to play

The marked stones are all pivotal stones, as they are cutting stones. Neither side can afford to lose his stones here, but fortunately for Black it's his move. He wants to capture the two white stones or otherwise seize an advantage, but he has to watch out for the threat of White 'a'.

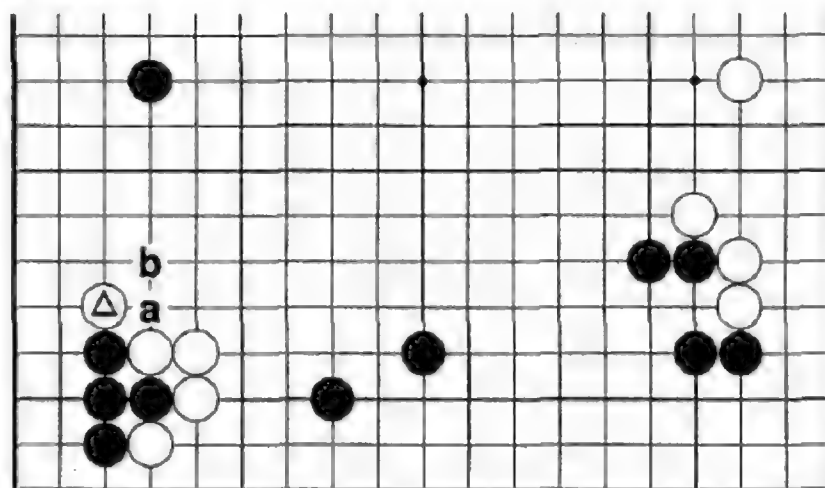
Problem 3



Black to play

Black can use the aji of his single stone trapped inside White's group to take endgame profit. He has a clever combination.

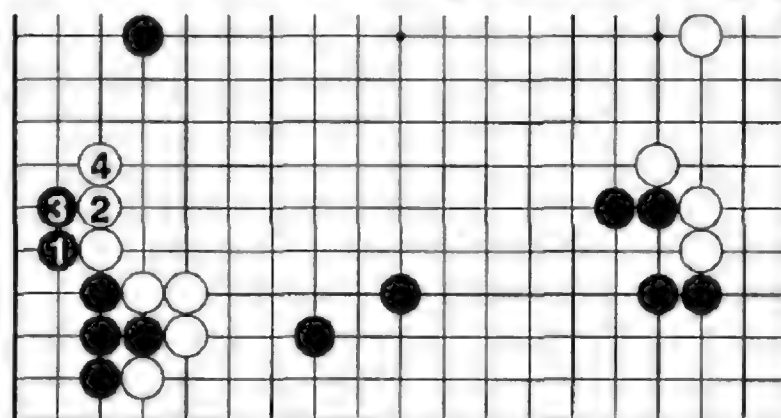
Problem 4



Black to play

White has just played the marked stone. The black corner group is in no danger, of course, but considering Black's numerical advantage in the vicinity he wants to harass White as much as possible.

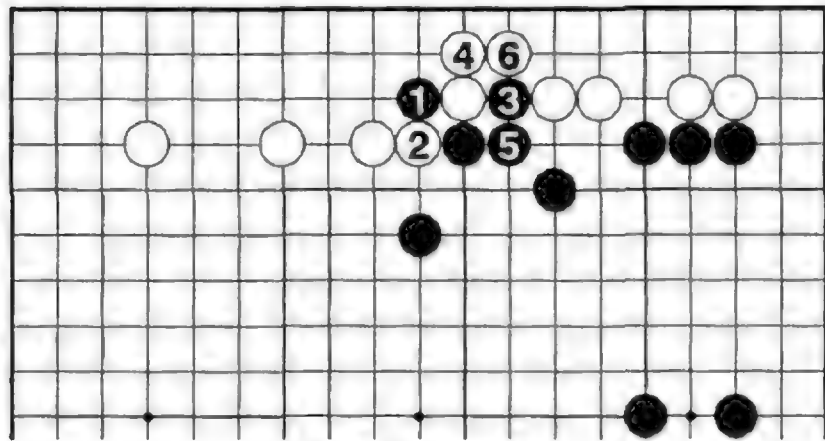
In short, what is Black's best counter to White's hane? The premise is that he can't cut at 'a', as the ladder with 'b' favours White. Hint: Black 1 in the *Ref. Dia.* makes it too easy for White. *Answers begin on the next page.*



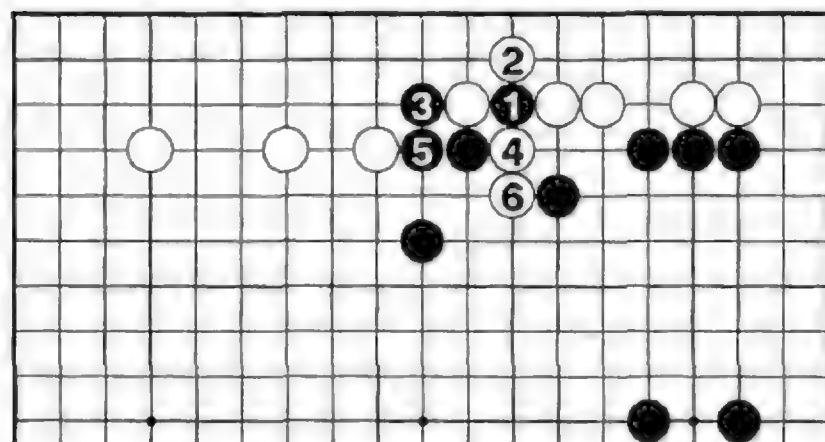
Ref. Dia.

Answer to Problem 1

Dia. 1. The first move likely to occur to one is the hane at 1. Up to 4, everything seems to go well, but suddenly Black realizes that he can't descend at 6 (White cuts at 5), so he just connects at 5. Black's only accomplishment is not losing sente; that aside, he has just helped White to solidify his position.



Dia. 1: wrong

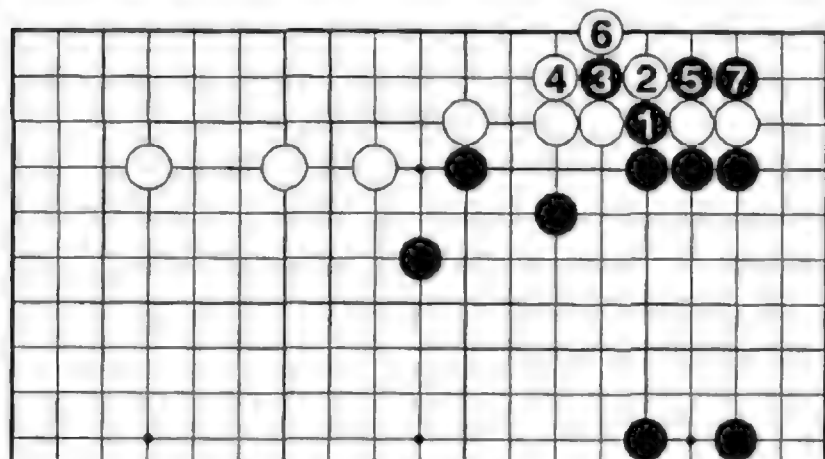


Dia. 2: more stylish, but ...

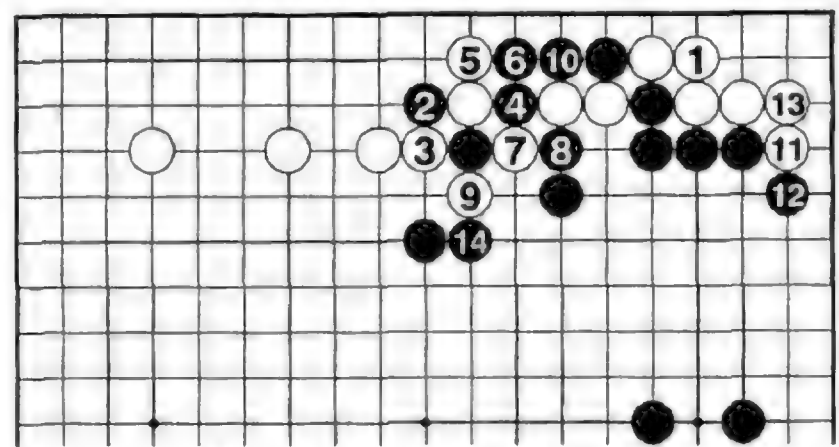
Dia. 2. The wedge of Black 1 is a little more stylish, but not really any better. It enables Black to break through at the top with 3 and 5, but White also breaks through with 6. Black can't be said to have profited.

Dia. 3. Pushing through and cutting with Black 1 and 3 is the correct answer. If White 4, Black takes the corner with 5 and 7 and is satisfied.

This really is a standard technique — if that were all, you might wonder why we bother with this position. The real interest of this problem lies in the variations when White refuses to give up the corner stones. Instead of 4 —



Dia. 3: correct



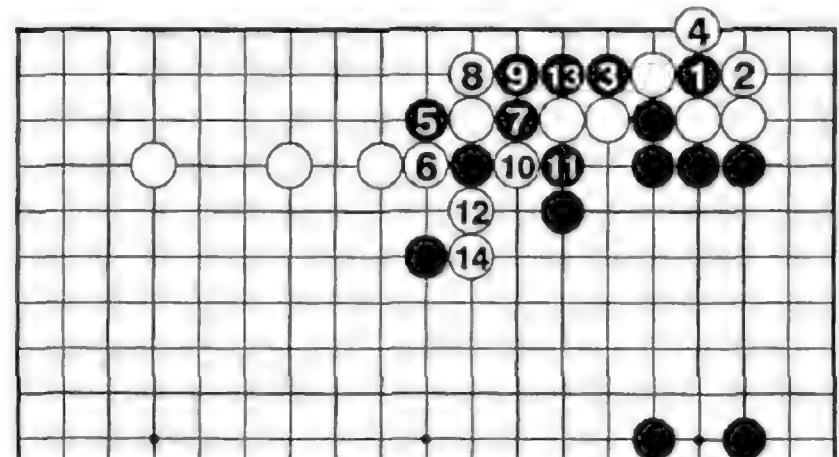
Dia. 4: success for Black

Dia. 4. If White 1, the hane of Black 2 now works well. Unlike before, Black can descend at 6, as after 7 he can capture two stones with 8 and 10. This is sente, moreover, as White has to live in the corner with 11 and 13. Black can therefore come back and block off the centre with 14. Saving his corner stones has backfired on White.

If White omits 11, Black descends at 11, and the corner is dead. (If White 13, Black makes a hane, then a placement on the 2-point.)

(Note that after 13 White doesn't have the aji of a clamp below 12.)

Black must cut on the left with 3 in *Dia. 3*. Instead —

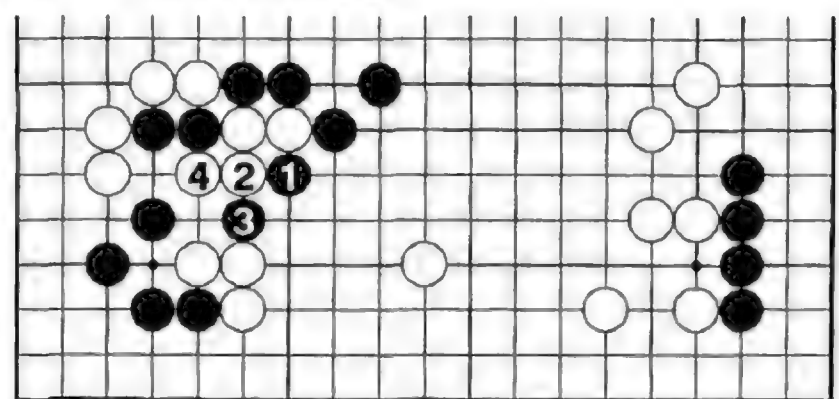


Dia. 5: wrong timing

Dia. 5. If Black cuts at 1, capturing with 2 and 4 is correct. After the same sequence to 13, White doesn't have to defend the corner, as it is already alive, so he can thrust down at 14. This is a big difference from *Dia. 4*.

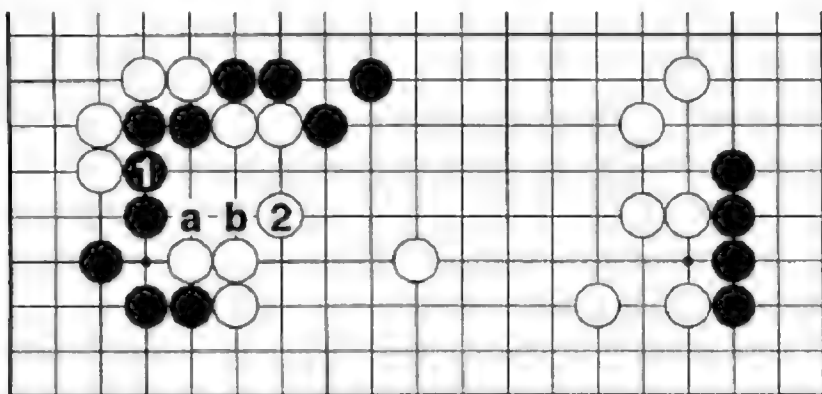
(*Go Weekly*, 6 October 2004)

Answer to Problem 2



Dia. 1: futile

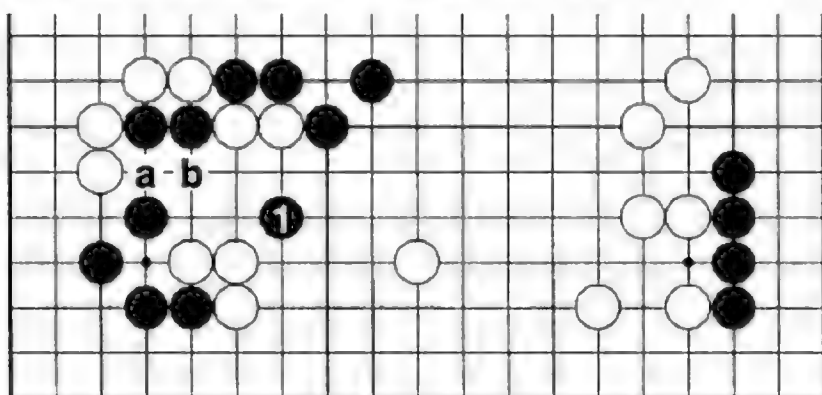
Dia. 1. The simple atari of Black 1 obviously leads nowhere. Playing an atari at Black 2 instead is just as futile.



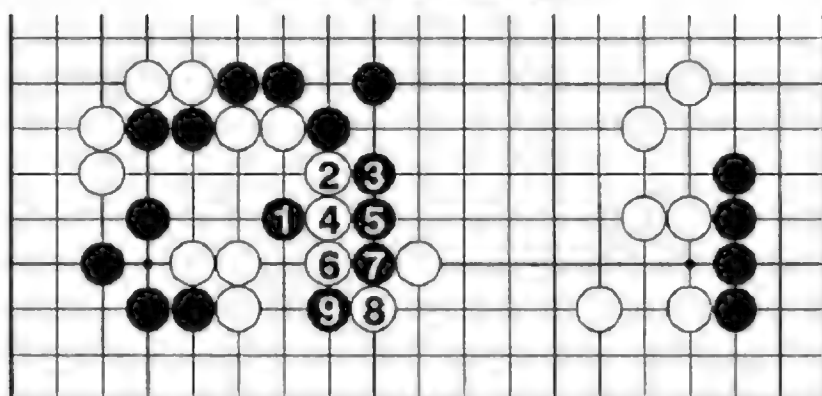
Dia. 2: useless

Dia. 2. Defending with Black 1 is too slow — White makes good shape with 2. If instead Black 'a', White answers at 'b'.

Dia. 3. Black 1 is a stylish move that makes life hard for the two white stones. If White plays 'a', Black can now safely answer at 'b'.

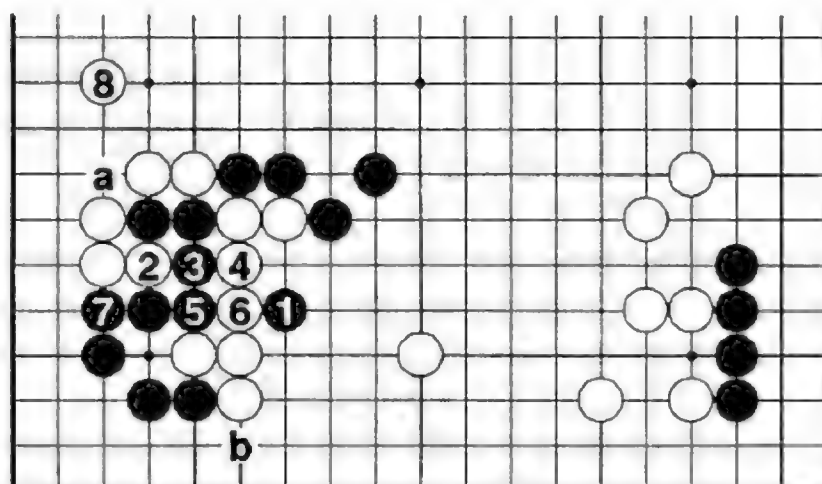


Dia. 3: the tesuji



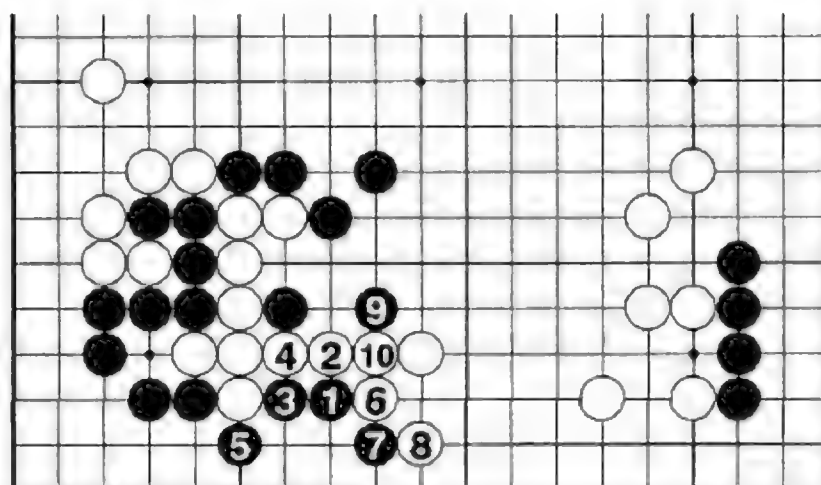
Dia. 4: in tatters

Dia. 4. If White resists with 2, Black 3 is a good counter. After 9, White's position is in tatters.



Dia. 5: the game continuation

Dia. 5. This problem comes from a professional game. White answered 1 by linking up with 2 to 6, and this seems to be the best answer. Black is short of liberties in the corner, so 7 is necessary. White 8 is also necessary to forestall Black 'a'. Next, White 'b' will be sente against the corner, but before White gets a chance to play there —



Dia. 6: a superb sequence

Dia. 6. Black makes the clever attack of 1. White has little choice but to play 2, whereupon the blunt moves of 3 and 5 work well. Black has eliminated his bad aji in the corner while making a big reduction in White's territory.

Black's tesuji in *Dia. 3* triggered a superb sequence, with both sides playing well. There's a lot to learn from the play here. I recommend playing the moves out on a board to appreciate them fully.

(Go Weekly, 12 July 2004)

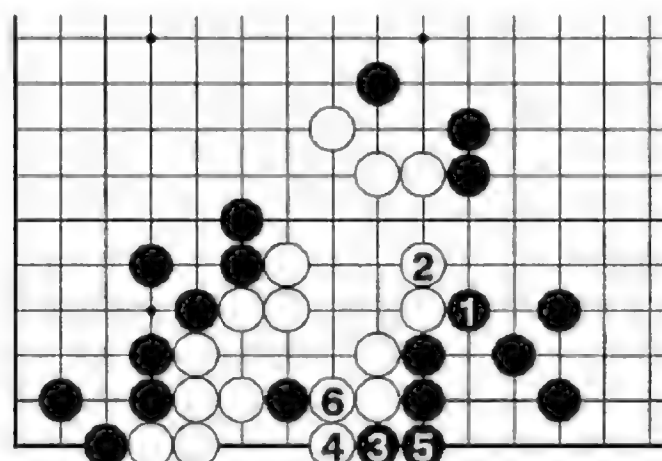
Answer to Problem 3

There are two principles to remember when trying to pull off something inside the opponent's territory.

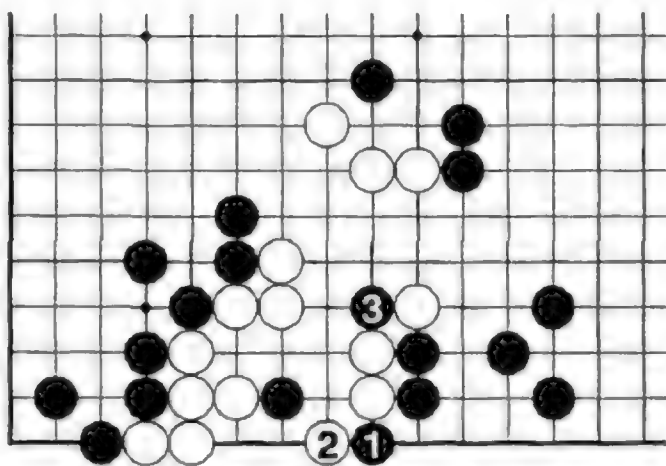
1. Keep absolute sente moves in reserve.
2. Cut to create aji.

Let's see how the above apply to this problem.

Dia. 1. If Black 1 and 3, White will be satisfied: he gets the maximum territory possible.



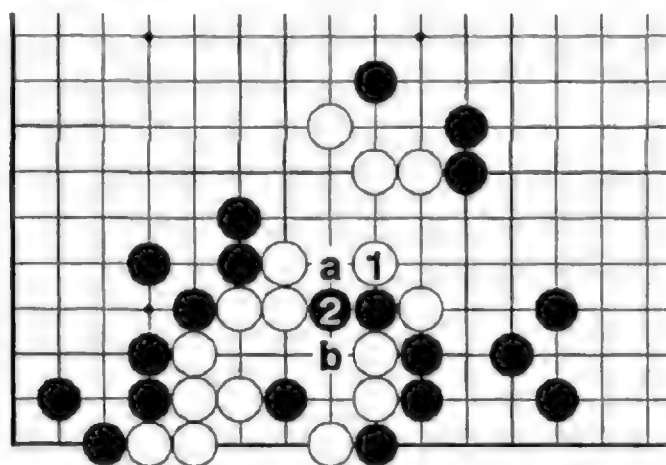
Dia. 1: wasting the aji



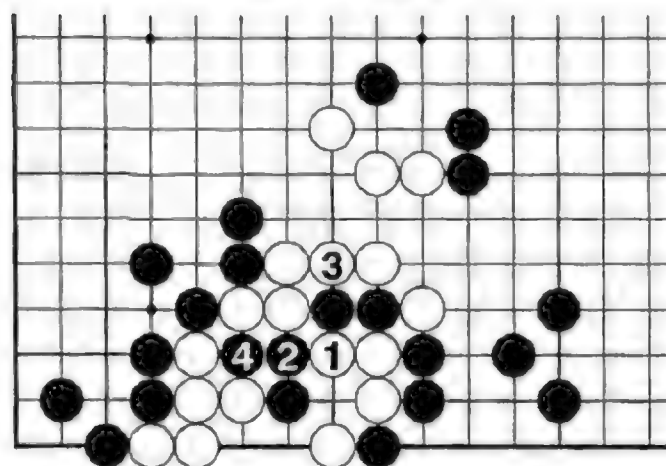
Dia. 2: a brilliant combination

Dia. 2. If Black hanes at 1, 2 seems forced. This has reduced White's liberties, so cutting at 3 is very severe. White can't avoid losing something. Next —

Dia. 3. White naturally ataries at 1, but Black 2 is an exquisite move. White now finds himself at a loss. If White 'a', Black captures the stones below with 'b', but —



Dia. 3: tesuji!

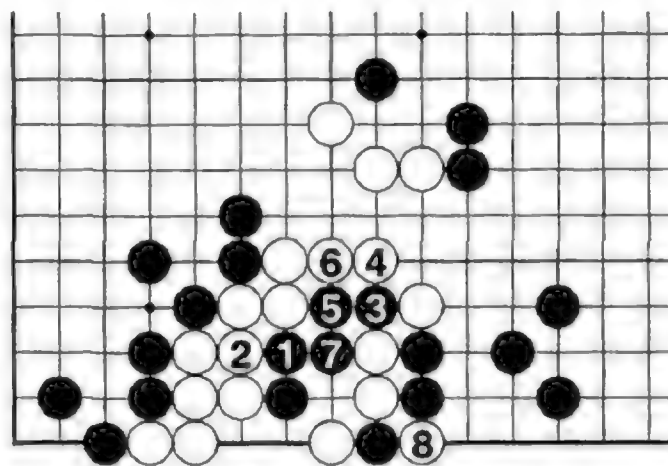


Dia. 4: disaster

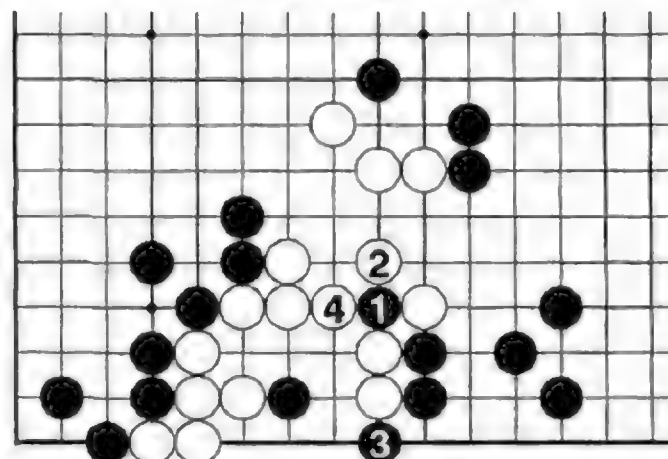
Dia. 4. If White ataries underneath at 1, Black captures the stones to the left.

Dia. 5. Changing the timing makes a world of difference. Playing Black 1 before the cut is a mistake; now when Black plays 3 White can safely counter with 4 and 6. Because of the 1–2 exchange, Black can no longer atari from the inside. Absolute sente moves like 1 have to be kept in reserve until the right time.

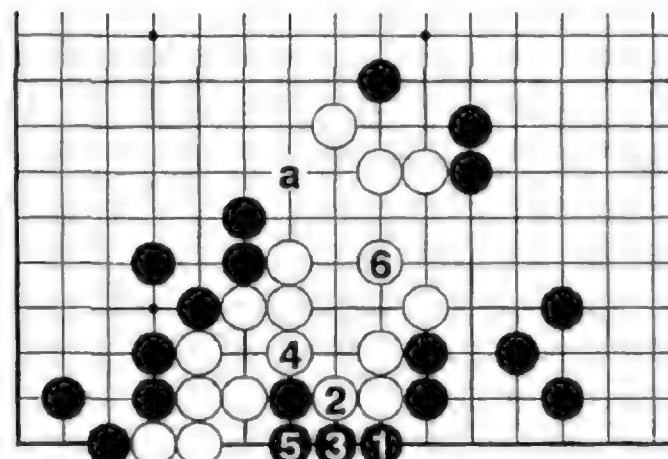
Dia. 6. Cutting at 1 first is another mistake in timing. The cat is out of the bag, so to speak; there's a good chance now that White will sense danger and answer Black 3 by compromising with 4.



Dia. 5: wrong timing



Dia. 6: wrong timing

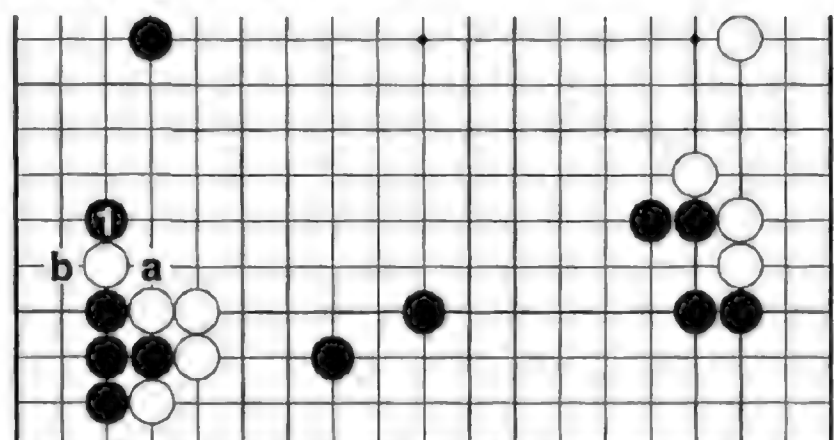


Dia. 7: compromise

Dia. 7. If White realizes what is afoot, he will probably compromise with 2 to 6. However, this means Black has gouged out his territory in sente. Moreover, White doesn't have proper eye shape yet; later, Black may be able to harass him with a move around 'a'.

(Go Weekly, 27 September 2004)

Answer to Problem 4

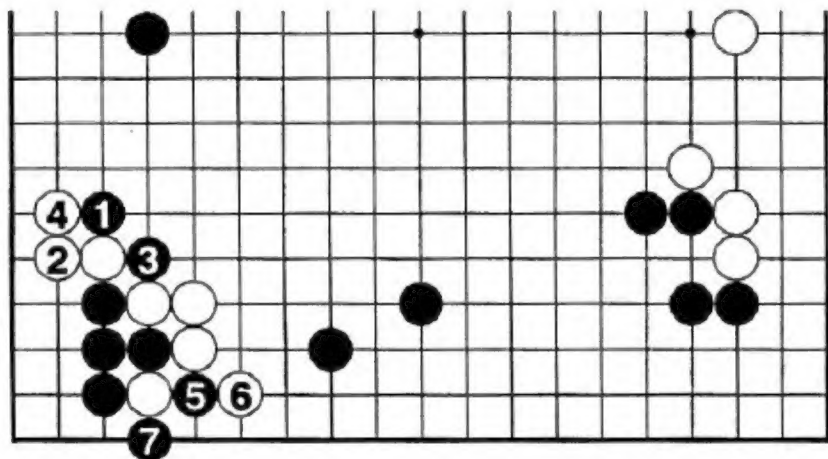


Dia. 1: uncompromising

Dia. 1. The sequence shown in the reference diagram was what was played in the game. If

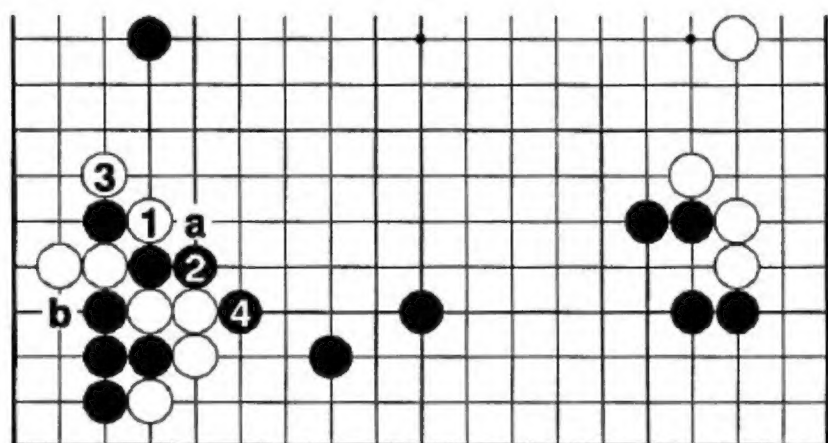
you were watching the game half-asleep, you might not question it, but actually Black let slip a good opportunity to attack White.

The tesuji is the clamp of Black 1. This shows an uncompromising attitude. If White 'a', Black plays 'b' and has gained considerably on the reference diagram, as he has moved up to the third line.



Dia. 2: a tough fight

Dia. 2. Fighting spirit demands that White resist with 2, but when Black cuts at 3 he faces a tough fight. The presence of 1 means that the ladder is irrelevant. There's no way White can capture both 1 and 3, so Black secures his corner group with 5 and 7. With both his groups eyeless, White will probably have to discard one of them.



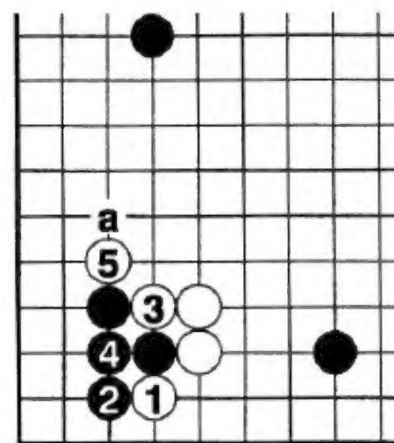
Dia. 3: captured

Dia. 3. White probably has little choice but to look after his side group with 1 and 3, though the bottom group is beyond rescue after Black 4.

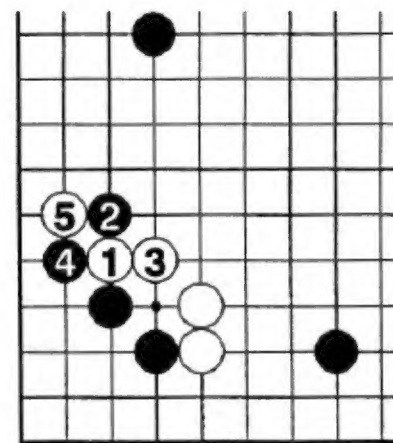
Note that when you have alternative moves that are absolute sente, like 'a' and 'b' here, the best policy is to keep both in reserve. That actually puts much more pressure on White.

Dia. 4. White got into his difficult position by playing the crude forcing moves of 1 and 3 here. The hane at 5 just invites the sharp attack of Black 'a'. Instead of 1 —

Dia. 5. White should simply attach at 1. If Black plays another clamp tesuji with 2, he can pull back at 3, then cut at 5. This way he has more chance of settling his stones.



Dia. 4: crude play

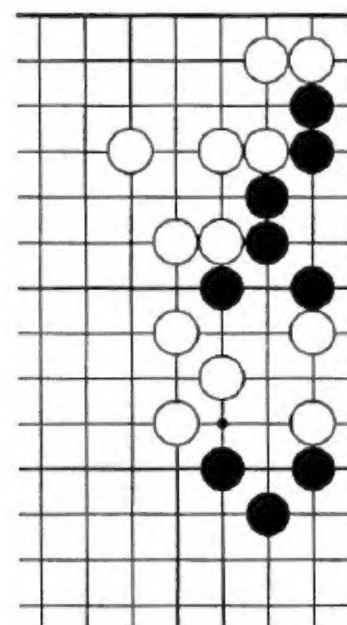


Dia. 5: correct play

(Go Weekly, 17 November 2004. Translated by John Power.)

Life-and-death problem

by Kawamoto Noboru 4-dan



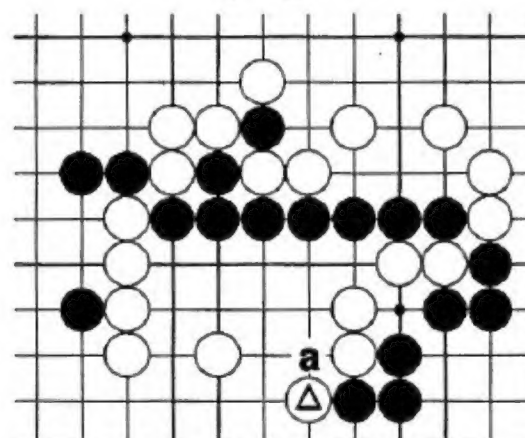
Black to play

Black has to either make eyes or link up to his allies below, but neither seems easy.

A tesuji is called for.

Answer on page 64.

Tesuji problem



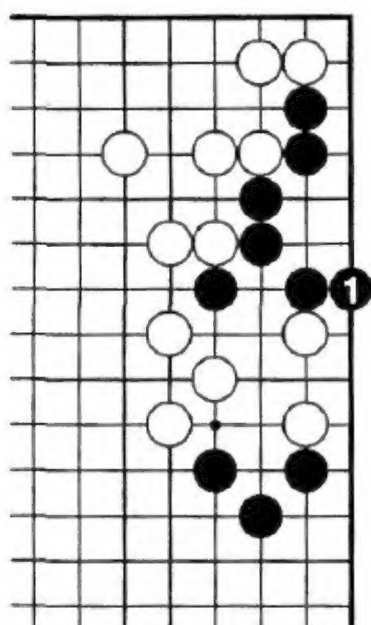
Black to play

How can Black rescue his eight stones? If he cuts at 'a', he can capture the marked white stone, but, needless to say, that is not good enough.

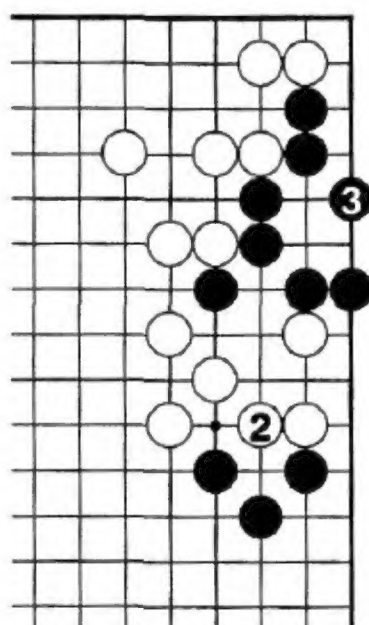
Answer on page 64

Life-and-death problem: Answer

Dia. 1. Descending at 1 is the answer: this makes miai of securing eye shape and linking up.



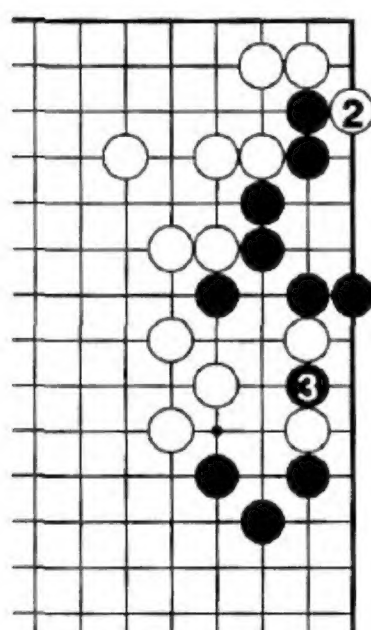
Dia. 1: correct



Dia. 2: alive

Dia. 2. If White 2, Black 3 guarantees two eyes. The question is: why is White 2 necessary?

Dia. 3. If White stops Black from making two eyes with 2, Black unleashes the brilliant wedge tesuji of 3.



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Original Japanese Woodblock Prints

Original Japanese wooden block prints (*ukiyo-e*) on go themes by great Japanese artist are available for sale by Mita Arts Gallery. Mita Arts is a specialist in Japanese prints, and all prints are accompanied by a certificate of authenticity. The two prints below are currently being offered for sale.



Title: Competing for Glory in Shinagawa-ro (*Shinagawa-ro Zensei Kurabe*)

Artist: Chikanobu; **Format:** Oban Triptych

Date: 1880; **Publisher:** Matsumotoya Heikichi

Condition: Good; **Price:** \$800

Six upper-class courtesans of Shinagawa-ro, a famous high-class brothel in Tokyo in the Meiji era. Each woman is identified by name.

Title: The Actor Nakamura Utaemon

Artist: Toyokuni I; **Format:** Oban Print

Date: C1800s; **Publisher:** anonymous

Condition: Good, but with crease through the middle

Price: \$600

The actor Nakamura Utaemon playing go.



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